

**The London School of Economics and Political Science**

**‘The Social Dynamics of Student Mobility in the European Union’**

**by**

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**This Thesis is submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree  
Doctor of Philosophy**

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**to my family and to my teacher and friend Nicolas Farclas**



## **Abstract of Thesis**

The purpose of the Thesis is to contribute to our theoretical and empirical understanding of the social dynamics of student mobility and higher education internationalisation in the European Union. Specifically, it examines the social factors influencing students from different EU countries in their choice i) to study in a country other than their own, and ii) select the UK as the place to study abroad. The Thesis approaches student mobility as a social choice and action effecting in the structuration of the European educational space, and the growing rapprochement and closer interaction among European higher education systems, actors, and societies, that is European social integration. The Thesis argues that student mobility and the structuration of the European educational space is a social process relating to systemic factors but also the actions of collective and individual actors, involved in hierarchical games, aimed at increasing some type of capital (economic, political, social, cultural). In a context of mass higher education systems and growing internationalisation of economies, societies, and labour markets new educational hierarchies emerge influencing student educational choices to study abroad. Foreign language competences, international experiences, and cultural communication and knowledge appear to constitute additional skills and qualifications students perceive important educational credentials in their struggle for successful entry into, and development within, labour markets, the hierarchies of occupations, and social hierarchies. Moreover, the Thesis argues that student choice to study abroad in the EU can be best interpreted as an interaction of the effects of globalisation and European integration processes with national social contexts, and between country-systems relationships within which educational choices are made. The factors specific to European national and regional social contexts identified include: i) the position of national higher education systems (and institutions) in the international hierarchy of systems, ii) the stage of development and expansion of national higher education systems, iii) the diversity of higher education systems, institutions, structures, and traditions across EU countries, iv) the functioning of higher education systems and institutions. Such hierarchical stratification and diversity of European higher education systems appear to also contain the social dynamics of student mobility, higher education internationalisation, the structuration of the European educational space, and European social integration.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ADAR: Art and Design Admissions Registry  
AU: Austria  
BE: Belgium  
DE: Denmark  
DfEE: Department for Education and Employment  
FI: Finland  
FR: France  
GE: Germany  
GE-D: Democratic Republic of Germany  
GE-F: Federal Republic of Germany  
GR: Greece  
HESA: Higher Education Statistical Agency  
HU: Hungary  
IR: Ireland  
IS: Island  
IT: Italy  
LI: Liechtenstein  
LU: Luxembourg  
NE: Netherlands  
NO: Norway  
OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development  
PO: Portugal  
SP: Spain  
SW: Sweden  
SWI: Switzerland  
SZ: Switzerland  
UCAS: Universities and Colleges Admissions System  
UK: United Kingdom  
UKCOSA: The UK Council for International Education  
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation



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# **Introduction**

## **1 Rationale for the study**

At a world level, the European Union is the macro-region that has achieved the highest degree of integration among its members. The European Union (EU) is distinguished from other regional cooperation patterns, for the gradually increasing role of European institutions in the formulation and development of public policies, the gradual extension of competencies of European institutions in new policy areas, and the expansion over new territories, with subsequent enlargements to include new members.

The study of the European integration process and its outcomes, to date, has been mainly subject to economics, international relations, political science, and law approaches. In particular, economists focus on the process and development of European economic integration, and the interactions among economic actors. International relations approaches examine the relationships and interactions of European national governments. Political scientists explore the interactions and roles of European institutions and national or transnational interests in the development of EU public policies and the transfer of policy competencies from national to European institutions. Legal approaches examine the role of European law in the process of European integration. The study, however, of the interactions and effects of European social actors and social systems and the development of transnational social spaces within the EU region is less often investigated and less well developed.

This Thesis adopts such a social perspective and examines social aspects of the European process of integration. Specifically, it examines the process of higher education internationalisation and the creation of the European educational space. Education was not a policy area of EU interest in the initial Treaties establishing the European Communities. Through a gradual process, EU institutions have expanded their competencies over new policy areas including the policy area of education. The creation of a European educational space appears to lie at the heart of the EU involvement and action in this policy area. Supporting activities of European

educational institutions -and particularly higher education institutions- with a European or other international dimension are central in the EU educational policies. Prominent among them is the promotion of mobility of staff and students across the EU member states. European educational institutions, staff and students have found additional support for such activities.

The European educational space creation, higher education internationalisation, and the rapprochement of European national societies, their social systems and actors are ongoing and growing social processes involving actions and responses of multiple, actors, public or private, collective or individual with unequal resources at their disposal. These mainly include European institutions (European Commission, European Parliament, European Court of Justice, European Council of Ministers), national and regional governments, national or transnational business associations, higher education institutions and departments, transnational associations and networks of higher education institutions, individual academics and other higher education staff, and students. Policies adopted and promoted by public authorities set the stage, and shape the contexts within which social actors operate. Such contexts of opportunities or constraints may be shaped by deliberate policies, by consequences of other policies, often rational and intended but also unintended.

In this multi-actor process, the Thesis focuses on EU mobile students. From a social perspective, student mobility can be approached as a social choice, action, and process by which the composition of European higher education institutions' student population becomes more multi-national, higher learning processes become transnational, and knowledge, values, and ideas are transferred beyond national borders, throughout the EU. In such a perspective, student choice to study in another EU country can be approached as a social process that effects in the creation of a European educational space. Within this transnational educational space social interactions increase, social relations develop and expand over new spaces, while European national societies, and their social systems, get ever closer. In this sense, mobile EU students can be approached as agents of the social integration of the European Union.

Focusing on mobile students, the Thesis seeks to provide a theoretically informed empirical understanding of the factors influencing student choice to study abroad in the EU. Specifically, it seeks to shed light on the social dynamics and the 'driving forces' of the growing process of complete or partial internationalisation of higher learning processes and of the student population in EU higher education institutions. Such an understanding of the social dynamics of student mobility in the EU also contributes to our understanding of the process of the European educational space creation and the broader process of rapprochement of European higher education institutions and societies, that is, the social dynamics of European social integration. In addition, such an understanding can provide a basis for a partial evaluation of policies supporting the development of student mobility and further inform policy-making and policy design at the EU, the national, and the level of higher education institutions.

Student mobility is a phenomenon that has a historical and global dimension. Students have been found to study abroad even before and without the policy support of national and European authorities or other international organisations, but on their own initiative. The number, however, of students studying in a country other than their own for a short period of study, the full duration of a higher level degree or for their whole higher level learning is on the increase, with sometimes a regional dimension. Although, reliable statistical data at a global level is difficult to obtain-and those available must be treated with much caution- it appears that such an increase is, particularly, observed in the EU region.

In addition, available data suggest that in the period from early 1980s to mid-1990s, in the European region, mobile student flows are uneven and have changed direction. The UK is currently by far the most popular destination country among EU students studying in another EU country for a period or for the full duration of higher level courses. UK statistical sources show that the demand for undergraduate study in the UK is growing rather rapidly. Therefore, the Thesis takes the case of students from EU countries studying in UK universities and examines the factors influencing: 1) student choice to study in a country other than their own, and 2) the choice of the UK as the place to study abroad.

## **2 The Thesis' main argument**

This investigation set out to contribute to our understanding of the growing phenomenon of student mobility and the variable patterns of mobile student flows in the European Union. It approaches students as social actors, and their educational choice to study abroad as social action resulting in the structuration of the European educational space. The European educational space is a transnational social space of actions and interactions of multiple actors with unequal resources at their disposal, acting at different levels (European, national, or the level of higher education institutions). Such superordinate actors, acting at macro or meso levels, develop policies and regulations, setting limits and constraints or providing opportunities to subordinate social actors acting at lower and micro levels.

The Thesis takes the case of students from EU countries studying in UK universities, as subordinate micro-level social actors, and seeks to provide an evidence based and theoretically informed understanding of the social factors influencing such choice and action. It thus seeks to contribute to our understanding of the social dynamics of student mobility, the internationalisation of higher education, the structuration of the European educational space, and the process of European social integration. Therefore, it examines how student choice to study abroad increases student's cultural capital in their social struggle for successful entry and development within labour markets, the hierarchies of occupations, and social hierarchies in European societies. Specifically, it examines the role of globalisation and European integration processes, the massification of higher education systems, the stratification of higher education systems and institutions in the EU, and the diversity of systems and traditions across EU countries, in student educational choices and actions.

The main argument of the Thesis is as follows: the dynamics of student mobility in the EU, and the structuration of the European educational space cannot be fully explained with sole reference to the policy and regulatory contexts within which student mobility develops. Although the role such policies play in the growth of student mobility cannot be underestimated, explanations that would reduce the dynamics of student mobility to deliberate policies developed at European, national or the level of higher education institutions are rather unsatisfactory. The Thesis

provides evidence that the dynamics of student mobility appear to transcend and constrain such educational policies developed at a European, national or institutional level.

Therefore, the Thesis argues that a better understanding of student mobility in the EU can be provided by focusing on the social factors shaping student motives for studying abroad and influencing student educational choices. Specifically, the evidence of students from EU countries studying in the UK, for a degree or for a period, suggests that international educational mobility of students may be best understood as a social action, choice, and strategy relating to student's social aspirations for either upward social mobility or maintaining student's high social position.

Student choice to study abroad in the EU takes place in a social context shaped by mass higher education systems and growing internationalisation of national economies and societies. Massification of higher education systems in the EU has meant that higher education qualifications have become common entry qualifications to a wide range of occupations, increasing the social competition for entry into the hierarchies of occupations, and social hierarchies. Globalisation and European integration processes have also meant that national economies, labour market domains, and social contexts in the EU have become more international and shape the social context within which student perceptions are shaped and educational choices are made. The Thesis shows that in such a context, new educational hierarchies emerge in addition to more traditional educational hierarchies of academic status and prestige. Emerging new educational hierarchies include the acquisition of additional skills, such as foreign language competencies, international and intercultural experiences and knowledge. Such additional skills and educational credentials are perceived to provide mobile students with comparative educational advantages in their struggle for cultural capital, and their successful entry in competitive labour markets, the hierarchies of occupations and social hierarchies. In such a changing social context a hierarchy of foreign language skills also emerges with English language occupying a particularly high position, as it dominates growing international communication. The growing density of international communication over - particularly- the last decades and the dominant position of English language appears

to best explain the popularity of the UK (and other English speaking countries at a global level) as destination country among EU mobile students. It may also best explain changes in the direction of student flows towards the UK that have occurred in the same period. The effects, however, of globalisation and European integration on student perceptions and educational choices does not seem to be spread in a uniform way across labour market segments and social domains. Such uneven effects may also account for differences in student mobility flows across subjects mobile students more frequently choose to study abroad.

In addition, the Thesis argues that a better understanding of the dynamics, trends, and flows of student mobility in the EU must also take into account country specific social and educational contexts as well as between-country systems' relationships. Specifically, three main such social factors, influencing student choices and actions to study abroad, have been identified in this research. First, student choices seem to also be influenced by the international stratification of higher education systems in the EU. Such stratification is based on more 'traditional' educational hierarchies of academic status, prestige, and -hence- visibility and social value at an international level. Second, the stage of higher education systems' development and expansion and their ability to meet the social demand for higher level qualifications. Third, the diversity of higher education systems and institutions across EU countries, reflected on the languages of instruction used, academic and scientific traditions embedded, vocational orientation of curricula, teaching and learning practices, admissions policies and practices, and degree structures developed within each country's system and institutions. Such diversity provides students with different options from which to choose for the fulfilment of their social aspirations for cultural capital and social mobility.



### 3 Structure of the Thesis

*Chapter One* reviews main themes in the literature on student mobility with emphasis on student motives for study abroad. It shows that little empirical research has been carried out on motives for studying abroad of students from, particularly, developed countries, and little theoretically informed understanding has been provided to date.

*Chapter Two* places student mobility into the conceptual framework of social and educational choice, action, and the structuration of the European educational space, discusses the theoretical underpinnings of the Thesis, clarifies main concepts used, and presents the research questions for investigation.

*Chapter Three* of the Thesis examines mobile student flow trends and patterns and argues that student mobility in the European Union is on the increase but flows across countries are highly asymmetric. It also examines EU student flow patterns towards the UK and shows the rapidly increasing trends with large differences across country of domicile, sex, field, and level of study.

*Chapter Four* of the Thesis focuses on macro and meso level actors and the structuration of the European educational space. It argues that although such actors, developing policies and regulations, set limits or provide opportunities to students in their educational choices, a focus on the existing policy and regulatory context does not provide satisfactory explanations for the growing trends, flow patterns and the dynamics of student mobility in the EU.

*Chapter Five* presents the methodology employed and guided the collection of qualitative and quantitative student data and the analytic approach adopted.

*Chapter Six* presents the results and analysis of quantitative data collected.

*Chapter Seven* discusses main findings (and limitations of this study), presents conclusions and highlights areas for further research.

## Chapter One

### Approaches to student mobility

#### *Introduction*

This chapter reviews the literature and research on foreign students and international study. Literature and empirical studies in this area are large and diverse bringing in different social science disciplines, such as sociology, economics, political science, international relations, and psychology.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, this review adopts a historical perspective and focuses on main themes and approaches of international study and student mobility. Throughout this review connections are made with policy developments, rationales, and approaches on student mobility at a national or international level. The last sections of this chapter reviews research and literature on students and their motives for study abroad. Emphasis is given on students in the European Union and the UK context, reflecting the focus of the overall research project.<sup>2</sup>

#### **1 Early approaches on student mobility and foreign study**

The international role of higher education institutions of developed countries is historical and multiple. Higher education institutions of western -and more developed- countries have a long tradition in developing activities with an international dimension, also including foreign student recruitment. As Knight and de Wit (1995) argue in the period from the 18th century, and until the Second World War, western universities served mainly the national objectives of nation-states. In this period,

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<sup>1</sup> Indicatively, the bibliography on foreign students and international study compiled by Altbach *et al.*, *Research on Foreign Students and International Study: An Overview and Bibliography*, 1985 included over 2.800 relevant publications. The update of that bibliography (Altbach *et al.*, *Foreign Students and International Study. Bibliography and Analysis, 1984-1988*), included over 500 more new publications.

<sup>2</sup> Although an international subject-matter, research and literature on international study appears to be developed mainly within the industrialised countries and particularly the US, a major receiving country of foreign students in the post-war era. This review is, however, limited to the literature published in English language. That is, references to other countries are only made if they are available (in full or in summary) in English language.

European universities, in particular, had three main international roles and activities i) they served as models adopted by, and transferred in other countries, ii) international communication of academics in scientific research, and iii) individual mobility of students and mainly scholars. Flows and patterns of such mobility were mainly shaped by the colonial relationships within, for example, the British Empire and France and its colonies.

In the first post-war period and in the context of the 'cold war' the international activities of universities were rather limited and -with few exceptions- were mainly replaced by nation-state cultural agreements, as part of their foreign policy activities (Knight and de Wit, 1995:5-9). In such a policy context at the national level, international organisations such as UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the World Bank, and the OECD seems to have played an important role supporting international activities of higher education institutions and encouraging international co-operation and development<sup>3</sup>. Support for international mobility of students and, particularly, academics was seen as an instrument of cultural communication, promoting mutual understanding and international peace. It must, however, be also added that the role of national competitions over spheres of influence within and between the international divisions brought about within the cold war dogma cannot be underestimated<sup>4</sup>. This is also reflected in patterns of student mobility mainly developing within the two blocs, and the limited mobility of students between Eastern and Western Europe throughout the post-war period and until 1989 (see UNESCO statistics). In the European region, it seems that the Council of Europe, operating above the European divide, has sought to support communication channels between Eastern and Western European universities promoting particularly mobility of academics. The role, however, of the

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<sup>3</sup> The role played by international organisations throughout this period is also illustrated in the historical experiences and development of the European University Association (known as CRE before 2001), a non-governmental association of European universities, set up in 1959 to promote academic cooperation and mobility in Europe, presented by Barblan (2002).

<sup>4</sup> For a worldwide overview of governmental interests, policies and involvement in international education in this period see also the collection of papers included in S. Fraser (1965). For a historical perspective of governmental interest in this area see particularly chapter three (W., Brickman, Historical Development of Governmental Interest in International Higher Education, pp. 14-46) in this collection.

Council of Europe and its activities in the educational and cultural domains throughout this period, appear not to have been thoroughly examined yet.

In the '60s and '70s and in the context of post-colonialism a one-way relationship was established in the international relations of universities and other higher education institutions. International relations and activities of higher education institutions in this period were characterised by: i) the growing number of students (as well as young scientists and scholars) from less developed and developing countries studying and receiving high level training in developed countries, and ii) the financial support and knowledge transfer (technical assistance) from developed to developing countries. International organisations, national governments and higher education institutions of receiving countries played an important role supporting, encouraging, and facilitating such activities (Knight & de Wit, 1995:5-9). Mobility of academics and students was also encouraged within the Commonwealth countries<sup>5</sup>.

In this period two main theoretical approaches on the international role of education were developed, the development theory (also referred to as modernisation theory) and the dependence theory (see also Goodman, 1984) largely reflecting ideological and political conflicts within the developed countries. These approaches influenced the direction and provided the conceptual lenses for empirical research and studies carried out. Development theory approaches international study and the international role of educational institutions -particularly higher education institutions- from the perspective of human capital development and provided the theoretical underpinnings for policy development. In this perspective, the international mobility of students constitutes an instrument for the transfer of knowledge and technology ('know-how') across countries. Such knowledge was seen as crucial for the economic and social development of less developed and developing countries. Critical approaches, however, emphasised the curriculum within developed countries and its relevance to the developing countries' needs. As Altbach and Lulat argue, in relation to the US, empirical research in this area is still limited and 'the few studies that have looked at this issue indicate that, in general, US curricula are not particularly suited to the needs

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<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Selvaratnam (1988), Maxey (2000).

of international students coming from Third World countries- especially with respect to the technical disciplines (engineering, agriculture, etc.) at the advanced levels<sup>6</sup> (1985:32). It appears, however, that no research has been carried out on the curriculum relevance of study abroad for students from less developed or developed countries studying in another developed or less developed country. Critics also pointed to the 'brain-drain' from developing to developed countries as students with high level expertise and ability tend to settle in host countries after the completion of their studies<sup>7</sup>.

Dependence theory points to the role of international study in the cultural integration of third world countries to the international economic and political system and to western culture and values. In the context of this approach emphasis was given to the integration of international students -and through them their countries of origin- in the values, beliefs, ideas, and consumer patterns of hosting countries. Students from less developed and developing countries studying at high levels abroad are usually a social elite group that upon their return play influential roles in their home countries. In this perspective international student mobility was seen as an instrument more of imposition of western culture on developing countries and cultures (cultural imperialism) than an instrument for their economic and social development (Carnoy, 1974, Kumur, 1979, 1980).

This approach -and particularly the political socialisation aspect within it- is not, however, uncontested. As Williams, for example, notes with respect to students from British colonies studying in British universities, 'the widespread belief that many ideas about national independence were learned in the lecture rooms of the LSE casts some doubt on this hypothesis. If it was imperialism it was an imperialism of ideas and not a narrow pursuit of British national interests' (1987b: 10)

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<sup>6</sup> For empirical studies on this issue see Altbach and Lulat (1985), p.32.

<sup>7</sup> For a study on brain drain and foreign students see Rao (1979). Rao examined attitudes and intentions of foreign students in Australia, the USA, Canada, and France. The study concluded that only a small minority of students from developing countries sponsored to study abroad fail to return home. This study, however, did not include non-sponsored students that choose to study abroad on their own initiative. Moreover, no longitudinal study has been carried out to examine the choices and actions of international students in their life cycle.

## ***2 Student mobility as internationalisation of higher education***

Since early 80s, and particularly in the 90s, the policy interest on student mobility and other international activities of higher education institutions has grown. Such activities of higher education institutions have attracted more the attention and support of international organisations (e.g. OECD<sup>8</sup>, UNESCO<sup>9</sup>) and the European Union institutions (Neave, 1984, Field, 1988). In addition, at the national level, although differences pertain (see Smith et. al, 1981, Kälvermark, 1997) governments have also developed policies supporting the international dimension of higher education institutions. The rationales underpinning such policy developments are multidimensional and interrelated, including economic, political, educational and cultural aspects. As Wende (1997:226-231) argues the economic rationale refers to policy objectives related to economic benefits (i.e. institutional income, net economic effect of foreign students and commercial benefits). Political rationale refers to the role and position of a country in the world and the political and ideological influence it exercises on a world level. The educational rationale refers to educational aims and functions of higher education, and the cultural rationale refers to the importance of intercultural communication and understanding and the position of a country's own culture and language. In the EU context importance is also assigned to the educational implications and prerequisites of the development and successful operation of a European labour market and the political requirements for enhancing European identity and citizenship<sup>10</sup>.

Recent studies and literature relate the growing policy interest in the international role and activities of higher education institutions with the intensification of international interdependence and competition at a global level (Knight and de Wit, 1995), the

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<sup>8</sup> For research activities and OECD seminars related to the internationalisation of higher education and foreign study see A. Dimitropoulos, (2000:pp.40-41). Internationalisation of higher education and international trade of educational services is also a priority theme in the current work programme of the OECD educational services, as reflected by the growing studies and seminars on this theme organised under its auspices.

<sup>9</sup> See for example the IAU (International Association of Universities) Statement 'Towards a Century of Cooperation: Internationalisation of Higher education' developed by the IAU Task Force as a Framework for Action and tabled at the UNESCO Conference on Higher Education in October 1988 in Bangkok.

<sup>10</sup> See also Field (1998).

regional development and co-operation (regionalism) between different states in certain world regions (Blumenthal et al, 1996), and the growing globalisation of economies, societies, and knowledge (Wende 1997, Green 1997). In particular, Knight and de Wit stress the role of the intensification of international economic competition and interdependence with the dynamic entry into world economic developments of Japan and the European Union. At the end of 1980s, those developments were reinforced and expanded with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the re-entry of Central and Eastern European countries into the western economic and political system. The impact of those developments Knight and de Wit argue was to give 'more emphasis to the globalisation of economic, social and political relations and knowledge' and 'to economic arguments for the promotion of international co-operation and exchanges in higher education' (1995:9). Similarly, Smith (1981) also argues that the growing policy interest over higher education internationalisation, in this period, have been accompanied by more emphasis on the economic aspects, effects, and benefits accrued by related policy programmes and initiatives.

Blumenthal *et al* (1996) also point to the role of intense international interdependence and the emerging regional patterns of groups of nation states in different world regions. Regional cooperation and development is seen as an effort made by policy authorities, acting at different levels (international, national, subnational, institutional) to respond effectively to the new developments and the challenges set by growing international interdependence and competition. Among the educational implications of regionalism, prominent stands the development of policies, strategies and processes for the internationalisation of higher education systems and institutions.

Wende (1997) emphasises the role of globalisation of societies, economies, and labour markets in the development of policies supporting the internationalisation of higher education systems and institutions. These developments create needs for academic and professional knowledge and skills such as foreign language learning, social and intercultural communication skills and attitudes. Wende stresses also the role played in the international co-operation of higher education -particularly in research related activities- by the level of expertise and the required financial investment in certain scientific fields (e.g. genetics, astrophysics etc.). Wende also points to i) the role of financial incentives in attracting students from other countries

as a means for increasing higher education institution's income as well as the national economic interest accrued by incoming students from other countries, ii) the use of new technologies in education services provision, and iii) the erosion of traditional relations of nation state, educational systems, and values caused by the unlimited diffusion of knowledge and information made possible by information technologies<sup>11</sup>.

In this socio-economic, political and policy context, the study of student mobility is placed within a novel conceptual framework. In particular, study abroad is approached within the wider concept of higher education internationalisation. The term internationalisation, although it is used in different ways (see Wende, 1997:17-20) it generally refers either to policies and strategies developed at different levels (i.e. international, European Union, national, institutional) or as a process taking place within higher education institutions and systems<sup>12</sup>. Internationalisation either as policy or as process aims at or effects in the integration of 'an international dimension into the research, teaching and services functions of an institution of higher education' (Knight & de Wit, 1995).

In such a context of growing policy interest at the international, European and national level policy programmes were developed supporting international activities in higher education institutions and mobility of students. Evaluation studies of related policy programmes, although of an empirical orientation, have focused on different aspects related to higher education internationalisation and student mobility within the developed countries. Such studies have, thus, expanded the knowledge base on the processes of higher education internationalisation and student mobility<sup>13</sup>. The growing policy interest in this area and the expansion of international activities within higher education have also instigated studies of a more theoretical orientation. Such studies approach higher education internationalisation and student mobility as

<sup>11</sup> For a critical perspective and assessment of the impact of globalisation on national education systems see Green, 1997. Green disputes the notion of a radical transformation of national education brought about by the internationalisation of national economies and societies. He does, however, accept that national education systems have become more 'porous' as a result of growing internationalisation.

<sup>12</sup> For an analysis higher education internationalisation and a conceptual distinction between internationalisation as policy or process see also Callan, (1998).

<sup>13</sup> For example, see the Study Abroad Evaluation Project (Burn et al., 1990a and 1990b), ERASMUS and LINGUA Evaluations (for major findings see Teichler & Maiworm, 1997), and the SOCRATES I programme Evaluation. For EU- Central and Eastern Europe see Kelm et. al 1997. For a US perspective see Carlson et. al., 1990.



approach higher education internationalisation and student mobility as processes of innovation and change at the institutional or system level and, more broadly, as processes of social change.

Internationalisation activities as processes of innovation and change at an institutional and system level has been recently examined within an organisational perspective. Specifically, Wende (1999), drawing on organisational and innovation theories, and adopting a top-down perspective, sought to examine the factors determining the institutionalisation and stabilisation of internationalisation processes and strategies within higher education institutions and systems. Important factors for internationalisation processes and changes to be successful Wende argues, are i) their compatibility with norms, values, and goals of higher education institutions and ii) their profitability, i.e. the satisfaction of organisations' needs such as economic benefits or social benefits in the form of social prestige. This perspective, however, does not account for persistent variation in the responses, strategies and practices of higher education systems, institutions, departments, academics, and students to policies for internationalisation of higher education institutions within and across countries. For, neither all higher education institutions nor all departments across an institution are equally active in attracting non-national students, developing and sustaining exchange schemes or other activities with an international dimension<sup>14</sup>. Moreover, not all places available to students to study abroad within ERASMUS are taken up by students, and there are wide differences in the take-up rates of such places across EU countries.<sup>15</sup>

Teichler (1999) adopting a broader social process approach to internationalisation has focused on the impacts and outcomes of internationalisation policies and strategies in the European Union. In this perspective Teichler argues that EU mobility programmes (and particularly the ERASMUS programme) had positive qualitative effects ('quantum leaps') on higher education systems and institutions in the EU. Specifically, Teichler argues that EU mobility programmes 1) fostered international co-operation

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<sup>14</sup> For such variation in the responses and strategies of higher education institutions see, for example, Barblan et al, 1998.

<sup>15</sup> For more details on take-up rates of ERASMUS places by students across countries see Chapter 3.

on more equal terms among European higher education institutions and systems, 2) they had a positive impact on a broader internationalisation of higher education in Europe, 3) they contributed towards a de-nationalisation of higher education as far as the substance and processes of teaching and learning are concerned. Teichler also argues that international activities (also including student exchanges) within higher education institutions expanded in volume and, despite differences across EU countries and institutions, are treated in more systematic ways with the development of international strategies at the institutional level. It must, however, be noted that although the quantitative leaps in the international activities of European higher education institutions would be difficult to be disputed, the qualitative leaps need further cross-country evidence before firm conclusions are drawn.

An actor-based process approach to internationalisation of higher education institutions has been developed by the Greek team within the ADMIT project. Specifically, the Greek team examined patterns of motives of 5 (out of 18) Greek universities, departments, and academics for developing international activities, and particularly student exchange schemes (Polydorides, et al., 2000b). The Greek team found large variation within the Greek university system with respect to their international activities and argued that patterns of institutional motives for internationalisation activities are influenced by an interplay of social hierarchies of institutions, departments, disciplines, and academics' views. Specifically, those ranked high in the hierarchy of universities, the hierarchy of departments within universities, and the hierarchy of disciplines are less prone to developing internationalisation strategies. Those of a lower position have a more active participation in EU mobility programmes and other international activities as a means for increasing their academic status and prestige. Polydorides & Papadiamandaki (2000a) also examined Greek students and their motives for studying abroad within such exchange schemes or on their own initiative and non-Greek students studying in Greek universities. On the basis of a small number of interviews with students (a sample of convenience) Polydorides and Papadiamandaki argued (Polydorides & Papadiamandaki, 2000a) that international educational mobility is associated with either upward social mobility or student desire to maintain their high social position.

Murphy-Lejeune (1998, 2002)<sup>16</sup> has also adopted a sociological perspective, drawing on Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital, and on the basis of qualitative analysis of interviews with mobile students, has developed the concept of 'mobility capital'. Mobility capital refers to the social dispositions of students that make them more likely to choose to study abroad. Murphy argues that such social dispositions mainly include family and personal history and legacy of mobility (e.g. mixed family, migration legacy, multiple nationalities, multilingualism), prior experiences abroad, foreign language competences, adaptation experiences, and personality characteristics of students (travelling personality, curiosity, sociability, and intellectual, cultural, and social openness to the international). Quantitative research, however, is needed, comparing mobile and non-mobile students in terms of their social, cultural, and personal dispositions, if strong evidence of the role of such dispositions in the choice to study abroad were to be provided. It would also be interesting such research to compare students from different countries and assess whether and how cross-country cultural dispositions and differences influence students in their choice to study abroad.

### **3 Economic approaches**

A series of studies have sought to examine the economics of student mobility and higher education internationalisation. Recent research in this area reflects mainly the growing policy interest in higher education internationalisation and the increasing numbers of mobile students at international level. In the UK context, such studies have been, initially, developed as a response to governments' policy introducing tuition fees for international students in 1980 (e.g. Blaug, 1981). Recent research in this area (Tuck and Greenaway, 1995) seems however, to be more related to the growing flows of international students in the UK and the growing dependence of UK institutions on international students fees, as a source for institutional income. Although, such studies have advanced our knowledge and understanding of the subject matter, there is still much to be done.

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<sup>16</sup> See also Houguenague, A. Murphy-Lejeune, E., Vaniscotte, F., (2000), and Vaniscotte, F., West, A., Houguenague, A., Dimitropoulos, Murphy-Lejeune, E., A., Stokes E., (2003) L' Harmattan, Paris, 2003.

Studies carried out in the context of the OECD/CERI work on higher education internationalisation<sup>17</sup> have sought to assess the economic impact of student mobility from the perspective of the home and the host country and the cost-effectiveness of policy programmes for the internationalisation of higher education. In this context, research carried out in Germany (Schnitzer et. al., 1996) analysed the direct and indirect costs and benefits of internationalised higher education. The focus of the study was on the costs and benefits for the individual, the state, and society in general associated with German students studying abroad and non-German students studying in Germany. Methodological limitations allowed only for initial conclusions to be drawn. Specifically, the study concluded that 'costs for outgoing students are found to outweigh benefits by a sizeable amount, although this is due to (current) difficulties in quantifying the benefits of foreign study. The opposite is true of incoming students, for whom benefits outweigh costs....Here, too, one should bear in mind that yet other yields -in particular, due to how earnings and employment rates affect tax revenues and social insurance budgets - could not be taken into account' (Schnitzer et. al., 1996, p. 70). Research carried out in Sweden provided a tentative assessment of costs and benefits of outgoing students. Based on rough estimations of the costs and resource savings deriving from outgoing students indicated an overall balance (Kälvermark & Lindström, 1996).

Research on the cost-effectiveness of different policy programmes for higher education internationalisation and cost-benefit analysis of incoming foreign students was carried in the Netherlands (Bremer, 1996). With respect to cost-effectiveness, the study concluded that 'unilateral programmes are most efficient in terms of numbers of student months produced by amount of programme funds and administration costs at national level. Multilateral programmes, in these terms, are also efficient, while bilateral programmes score rather badly. Secondly, the size of the programme has an impact on the efficiency of a programme: the larger it is, the more efficient it is. (p. 80). The effort made to conduct a cost-benefit analysis of foreign students faced complex methodological difficulties and therefore the scope of the analysis was limited. First, 'hidden' costs (such as accommodation, information material and

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<sup>17</sup> For more see the OECD/CERI work programme on 'Education in a New International Setting: Financing and Effects of Internationalised Teaching and Learning'.

services and other facilities, proportion of teaching, counselling and curriculum development costs) foreign students incur was not possible to be calculated. Therefore, the study concluded that 'it is not possible to obtain a clear and comprehensive picture of the full costs of internationalisation (here, the receiving of foreign students)' (p. 65). Second, concerning benefits the study concluded that with the exception of tuition fees quantitative information is not available particularly 'on the long-term intangible socio-economic benefits in the form of the effects on diplomatic and trade relations between countries' (p. 65). Therefore, the study called for further research on this complex issue.

In the UK context, studies carried out assessing the economic impact of international students, at the level of institutions and the national economy, have sometimes reached to conflicting conclusions<sup>18</sup> mainly due to conceptual and methodological difficulties involved, the assumptions made in defining costs and benefits, and practical problems for their accurate calculation.

Tuck and Greenaway (1995) recently sought to assess the economic impact of international students and carried out cost-benefit analysis at the level of institution, the local and the national UK economy. At the institutional level the study calculated average costs per international student (based on average costs per full-time-equivalent for all students) and weighted averages of student fees as revenues of international students. The study covered only 'old' UK universities as such data were not available for 'new' UK universities at the time the study was carried out (1992-93). It also excluded EU students as they are entitled to 'home' fee. The study concluded that when average research *and* teaching costs are calculated and compared with direct revenues (tuition fees) for the institution, the contribution of international students is variable, but often positive. It must be noted that this calculation takes no account of the economic and non-economic value of research. When only teaching costs are calculated the benefit is typically higher and positive. It thus appears that

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<sup>18</sup> Blaug (1981), for example, concludes that net costs of international students exceed economic benefits while Marris (1987) argues that it is profitable to even subsidise international students almost at any amount. For a discussion of the economics of international students in the UK see also Mace (1987).

international students incur higher benefits for, particularly, UK institutions with little engagement in research activities.

At the level of local and national economy, for Tuck and Greeaway, international students represent exports of educational services similar, for example, to tourism. Calculating tuition fees and student expenditure, (for example, subsistence, accommodation, entertainment) the study concluded that international students constitute an injection to the circular flow of income, raising income and employment. Specifically, the study estimated that international students as exports contributed (in 1992/93) to a total of £716.4 million (with no adjustment for import content), equivalent to 0.11% of 1992 GDP, 0.20% of final consumer's expenditure, and 0.50% of aggregate exports. It was also estimated that such injection multiplied through the circular flow effects in an eventual increase in GDP in excess of £1 billion and initiates an increase to employment by approximately 40,000 jobs.

Tuck and Greenaway also point to non-economic costs and benefits of international students for higher education institutions and the UK as a whole. In particular, international students offer higher education institutions the opportunity for benchmarking and, albeit informal, a quality control device; they may stimulate innovation in terms of curriculum development and course delivery; and they provide home students with opportunities for cultural enrichment, fostering of mutual understanding, and broadening of horizons. For the UK, no-economic benefits include promotion of English language and British culture, goodwill, and stimulate the flow of future students, other visitors, or tourists. Non-economic costs in terms of reputation and goodwill may include a decline of entry standards and in-appropriate quality control procedures or course delivery, in the effort of institutions to attract and recruit large numbers of international students. Tuck and Greenaway note that there is no hard evidence of such costs (p. 34).<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> This assertion seems to be somewhat contrasting with the findings of the study carried out in Greece within the ADMIT project, where, on the basis of interviews with a small number of Greek students studying in the UK (a convenience sample), it was claimed that the most important reason for Greek students to study abroad is the difficulties they face in accessing higher education courses in Greece. In that context, the choice of Greek students to study in UK institutions seems to be increasingly associated with those students failing in competitive exams, provoking harm to the reputation of UK higher education institutions, (see Polydorides and Papadiammandaki, 2000a). This assertion may, however, refer to UK higher education institutions of lower prestige and admissions standards and not the whole UK system.

Throsby (1995:7) summarising recent research carried out in this area (including research carried out within the OECD/CERI work and Tuck and Greenaway's study) argues that from the viewpoint of receiving countries, such as the UK and Australia, 'the revenue from fee income and the costs of servicing foreign students do seem to be more or less in balance in the years studied, suggesting that neither country is making a significant surplus or deficit on this internationalisation activities in the higher education sector'. Concerning sending countries existing research seems to suggest that costs are rather higher than benefits.

Despite the methodological and conceptual progress made by recent research carried out on the costs and benefits of international student mobility, it seems that more research is needed in this area. Existing evidence seems to suggest that it is the quantification and measurement of the benefits than the costs of international mobility of students for individuals, higher education institutions and systems, and national economies and societies that further research is required to tackle (see also Throsby, 1996:53-54). The conceptual and methodological complexities involved in assessing the overall economic impact of foreign study highlighted by existing research and literature calls for the development of more sophisticated methodologies before firm conclusions are drawn.<sup>20</sup>

#### **4 Other approaches**

Social and learning experiences of mobile students and their adjustment in the cultural and educational context of the host country have been persistent themes and subject to a series of studies. The Spaulding review of the literature (Spaulding, 1976) found

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<sup>20</sup> In such background of available knowledge concerning the economic and non-economic, short and long term costs and benefits of student mobility for home and host countries, public choices made aimed at either facilitating or impeding student mobility, it could be argued, remain rather political, ideological, and cultural, with large variation across countries. In Greece, for example, public policy debate on student mobility is dominated by the governmental concern about loss of foreign exchange due to large numbers of Greek students studying abroad. References, however, to other economic and non-economic benefits of study abroad are rather rarely debated publicly, while coherent policy strategies to actually impede Greek students from studying abroad do not seem to be developed, nor concrete measures are employed to increase the low rate of Greek student participation in the ERASMUS programme. On the contrary, specific provisions exist and measures aimed at facilitating the return of Greek origin students (mainly immigrants) living abroad are taken (for more information on the Greek policy for student mobility and higher education internationalisation see Polydorides (1999)).

that the social and educational experiences of international students in the host country context was the subject of the larger number of studies in the period before early 1970s. As early as 1955 Lysgaard (Lysgaard, 1955) developed the U-curve hypothesis on the process of international student adjustment in the host country socio-cultural setting. Lysgaard argued that the process of social adjustment evolves in a U-shape starting from an 'easy' feeling, that is followed by a less well feeling of adjustment that, subsequently, turns in an acculturation into the new socio-cultural environment. Empirical research carried out does not, however, seem to support the argument that the social adjustment and the process of acculturation into the host society are processes associated with the duration of the living experience abroad. Klingberg and Hull (Klingberg & Hull, 1979) found that one quarter of international students reported suffering from psychological problems and depression. The study also found that personal depression, loneliness, and homesickness were problems not associated with the duration of the living experience abroad. Empirical research in this area has also sought to identify the variables determining positive social adjustment and integration into the foreign cultural and educational context as well as academic achievement of international students. The Klingberg and Hull study found that prior travel experience, language proficiency, and discrimination attitudes by natives are important factors for student social adjustment. White and White (1981) also found that international student attitudes towards the host country may also influence the adjustment process. It appears, however, that the association of student social adjustment with student motives for study abroad has not been explored.

Other studies have focused on the advising and counselling services for international students and sought to assess their role in the adjustment process. As Hull argues (Hull, 1978) advisers need to 're-emphasise their functions as educators within the educational community as well as within the surrounding communities' (p. 188). It remains, however, to be investigated to what extent such research findings have impacted upon policy and practice at the national and the institutional level as well as the factors determining the national and the institutional response to international student difficulties in social and cultural adjustment.

Some studies have focused on the academic performance of international students and sought to identify the variables affecting academic success. These studies have



stressed the important and dominant role played by proficiency in the language of instruction (see for example, Heil & Aleamoni, 1974). Other important factors identified were student prior academic background, the source of financial support, and the similarity or diversity of educational traditions between the home and host country. Sex, age and marital status seem to have little significance for student academic performance and scores in aptitude tests taken prior their admission. As Altbach argues (1985:31) 'evidence suggests that departments would do better in terms of evaluation of an international applicant's ability to succeed academically by relying on two principal indicators: the applicants' prior academic track record and his/her performance on a language proficiency test'<sup>21</sup>.

## ***5 Research on student motives for study abroad***

This section reviews empirical research and studies carried out on student motives for studying abroad and for selecting the place to study abroad. Emphasis is given to research and studies in the EU and the UK context. The review shows that although research interest in this area is growing little theoretical development has been provided on the social dynamics of student mobility within the EU and other developed countries.

The Spaulding (1976) review of the literature on international students noted a paucity of research on student motives for studying abroad. That review found only three references that were devoted exclusively to foreign students and their motives for study in the US (p. 23). Byers (1971) using informal interviews with Asian students concluded that the leading industrial position of the US, the extensive use of English language (*lingua franca*), the quality and availability of US higher education are among the most important factors attracting students in the US. Byers also pointed out to the lack of higher education structures and facilities in home countries as well as

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<sup>21</sup> Research is also needed on the academic achievement and drop-out rates of mobile students. It would also be interesting to compare academic achievement and drop out rates of mobile students from different countries with domestic students and in different countries and institutions. Such comparative research would improve our understanding of the factors determining academic performance of mobile students. It must, however, be noted that research on the academic performance of mobile students is carried out by UK institutions, but it is not being published as results may be considered commercially sensitive or otherwise damaging to institution's status and market profile.

unsettled political or economic conditions as factors inducing students to study in a country other than their own. Meredith (1968) compared American and Asian-Pacific students and their motivational structure for studying at higher education level and found differences between the two groups with respect to reasons given, values, interests, influences, and needs related to such choice. Cowan (1968) examined the relationships between English ability of Japanese students and their reasons for studying in the US and found no correlation, Spaulding and Flack (1976:23) argued that 'from these studies and from data presented in broader studies....we may conclude that the major reasons for coming to the United States are to get advanced education or training that is not available at home, to acquire prestige through a degree from a US institution, to take advantage of available funds, to escape unsettled political or economic conditions, and, simply, to learn more about the United States.

Altbach and Lulat (1985:12-15) reviewing relevant research and literature on student motivations for study abroad argue that 'there are a myriad of push and pull factors involved in foreign study'. Although they stress that the choice to study abroad is an individual one, they identify key variables affecting such personal decision. They distinguish such key variables pertaining to home country (push factors) and host country (pull factors). Push factors include availability of scholarships for study abroad, poor quality educational facilities, lack of research facilities, lack of appropriate educational facilities, failure to gain admission to local institutions, enhanced value (in the market place) of a foreign degree, discrimination against minorities, political uncongenial situation. Pull factors to host countries include: availability of scholarships to international students, good quality education, availability of advanced research facilities, availability of appropriate educational facilities with likely offer of admission, presence of relatives willing to provide financial assistance, congenial political situation, congenial socio-economic and political environment to migrate to, opportunity for general international life experience. Altbach and Lulat also note that the motivations for study abroad among students from the industrialised nations differ significantly from those from developing countries. They stress, however, that 'there has been no comprehensive study of the motivations of students from the industrialised nations who study abroad, but it seems clear that the impetus is more personal and cultural than it is professional or economic' (1985:15).

Ever since, some evidence on students from developed countries and their motives for study abroad has been provided in the context of policy evaluation studies. The development of policy programmes supporting study abroad reflects the growing policy interest in the internationalisation of study within developed countries and particularly in the EU. Such empirical evaluation research has improved the empirical knowledge base in this area. For example, the 'Study Abroad Evaluation Project' (SAEP) examined study abroad programmes in five different European countries (UK, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Sweden, US) and their impact on students (Oppen, et. al., 1990). This study also examined the motives of students from those countries for studying abroad and at different disciplines. The main findings of the SAEP study were that the most important motivating factors were students' interest to experience a foreign setting, improving foreign language, and improving their career prospects. Some noteworthy differences were found between students from different countries. Specifically, travelling around in different countries was most important for students from the UK, US, Sweden. On the contrary, French students expected more to receive better marks or examination results after a study abroad period. Swedish and British students assigned less importance than students from other countries to furthering their understanding of the host country. Some differences were also observed between students studying in different fields. Those studying foreign languages and business showed more interest to use or improve their foreign language skills and expected more that their study abroad period would reflect on their marks or examination results. No interpretation of differential motives has however, been provided.

Empirical research on students from developed countries and their motives to study abroad for a period has been conducted in the context of the ERASMUS programme evaluation. The survey of 1990/91 ERASMUS students examined student motives for study abroad (see Teichler and Maiworm, 1997). A total of 4,982 ERASMUS students were approached of which 3,263 responded (return rate 65,5%) and representation rate (12,4%). Students were asked to rate the importance to them (on a five level scale) on a list of 12 reasons influencing their decision to study abroad. A factor analysis extracted 4 dimensions of student motives; 75% stated cultural matters as important, 67% wanted to gain new experiences abroad, 46% stated academic reasons, and 4% stated other reasons (e.g. other friends were going, it was required for

the degree programme at home, expectation to get better marks or examination results after return, etc.). The most frequent reasons given as highly important (categories 1 and 2 on a scale from 1= 'strong influence' to 5= 'no influence at all') were: learning a foreign language (86%), self-development (81%), academic learning in a foreign country (77%), enhancing understanding of host country (72%), desire to travel (62%), wanted a break (56%), experience of new teaching methods (49%), desire to gain another perspective on own country (49%). The ERASMUS students survey also found that motives varied substantially by home country of student but only moderately by host country. Specifically, 'gaining new experiences was most often given by Irish and Italian students (79% each), as a reason for studying abroad while students from Greece (51%), Portugal (53%), and Spain (54%) viewed this factor as relatively unimportant. Conversely, students from Mediterranean countries stated more often that academic matters were important in their decision to study abroad, than students from Northern EC countries. German students most often stated cultural reasons (88%), while only half of the Portuguese students viewed such motives as important. The proportion of Irish students who stated that they had not thought much beforehand about their decision to study abroad was surprisingly high (31% as compared to 9% of all ERASMUS students' (p. 42).

The survey of 1998/99 ERASMUS students analysed 1,366 questionnaires (rate of return 49%)<sup>22</sup>. No major changes in student motives to study abroad were observed when compared with those of the 1990/91 survey findings. The report noted, however, that the response 'strong reason' increased by 4% on average across all categories. Therefore, it concludes that 'recent students...expressed the high and manifold expectations they harboured to a greater extent than those of the early 1990s' (p. 69). Some differences were also found between students studying in different fields of study. Specifically, 'students of agriculture, architecture, fine arts, and mathematics are more interested in academic and educational matters, students of education underscore cultural reasons, and students of economics mainly hope for a career advancement. Students of humanities, languages, law, social sciences and natural sciences are close to the average, whereas students of geography, medical

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<sup>22</sup> see the SOCRATES Programme Evaluation.

fields and communication underscore 'various reasons' less strongly than the average and are less interested in other matters' (p.69)

The purpose of these empirical studies has been to evaluate the EU ERASMUS programme and, therefore, the researchers gave no interpretation of differential patterns of motives shown between students. ERASMUS surveys have, however, provided evidence of some differences of student motives for study abroad within the EU countries (and particularly between Southern and Northern European countries) and fields of study.

Research on student motives for study abroad was also carried out in Germany by the Higher Education Information System (HIS) in 1996. The scope of the HIS survey (Müßig-Trapp and Schnitzer, 1997) was limited to German students in the natural sciences, social sciences, psychology and education having studied abroad for a period. Students in business economics were also included as a comparison group. The total number of students approached with a questionnaire were 3,240 and the response rate was 41.1%. The research found that the main factors motivating students to study abroad for a period were i) the desire to improve foreign language skills and their job prospects (about three quarters of respondents gave this as a 'very important' reason), ii) the desire to improve their understanding of other cultures and ways of living/working, and iii) a desire to learn to cope in a foreign environment. A further analysis (with structural equation modelling) of data on students conducted by Schnitzer & Bechmann (2000) in the context of the ADMIT project confirmed that relevance of experience of abroad for jobs and studies were the most influential factors for the international mobility of students while foreign language competence and experience abroad have a rather strong influence too. This analysis also found that social differences affect the inclination for study abroad. Specifically, it was found that the influence of the social background (measured at both parents occupation and level of education) on cross-border mobility is rather high, the influence of the economic situation appears minor. Therefore, the study concluded, that the cultural capital may be more important for the inclination to study abroad than the actual family economic situation.

In Sweden, research carried out by the National Agency for Higher Education examined the effects of study abroad on Swedish students, Swedish education and society. It also examined the motives of students for studying abroad. Specifically, 1,820 questionnaires were completed (out of 3,000 sent, response rate 61%) by Swedish students studying abroad within exchange programmes or for the full duration of their study (free movers). The most frequent reasons given by students (exchange and free movers) for studying abroad were personal development, cultural experience, interest in the host country, and to improve their foreign language skills. Minorities of students also gave as reasons that 'it was cheaper to study abroad', 'they were not admitted to the programme at home', and 'to be together with friends' (HSV, 1999).

The study carried out in 1994 in Sweden by the National Board of Student Aid (CSN) examined the reasons of Swedish students ('free movers' only) for studying in different countries abroad in 1991/92. This study found that the single most frequent reason given was 'It is interesting to study in a foreign environment' (especially) for the women. Other differences by sex found were: female students gave more frequently than men reasons 'I was interested in that particular country' and 'I was interested in the subject'. Male students gave more frequently than females that they chose to study abroad because the course seemed better abroad, or because it was not available in Sweden.

This study also found differences in student motives by field of study and destination country. Specifically, students within the humanities and languages went abroad more often than those in other fields, to experience living in another country. For students studying medicine a frequent reason given was that they were not admitted to the course in Sweden. This was also a relatively frequent reason for those in natural sciences and engineering. The non-availability of course in Sweden was given more frequently by those in arts, media/communication and medicine. Medicine and arts students gave less frequently their interest in studying in a foreign environment. Interest in the subject was more frequently given by students in arts, humanities, and media/communication.

Gaining living experience was more frequently given by students in France and Spain. Students studying in other Nordic countries, Switzerland, Great Britain and Germany stated more frequently that they had not been admitted in Sweden or that the course/programme was not on offer in Sweden. Students studying in other Nordic countries, Switzerland, Great Britain, and the USA gave relatively more often the reason that they thought that their course was better than in Sweden. Those studying in Central and South America stated more often that they had family members there or that it was the country of their origin. Those studying in Switzerland, Great Britain, Germany and North America stated more often that they chose to study abroad to increase their chances of getting a job abroad. Students in France, Italy, Spain and Asia stated more often that they had an interest in the subject or the country.<sup>23</sup> Although these findings support the argument that motives of mobile students may relate to host country, or subject studied, no interpretation of such differences has been provided.

Research carried in the context of the ADMIT project has made a further contribution to the empirical as well as the theoretical understanding of student mobility in the EU. Polydorides and Papadiamandaki (2000a) collected data on incoming and outgoing student mobility in Greece using in-depth interviews with a small number (a sample of convenience) of European and other international students studying in Greece and Greek students studying abroad for a degree or a period of study. Specifically, they argue that students pursue international educational mobility for three main reasons i) as a pathway to upward social mobility or maintaining student's high social position, ii) as a way to acquire specific scientific skills or training in particular techniques ii) as a way to gain cultural experience and communication skills. Polydorides and Papadiamandaki also argue that patterns of student motives for study abroad are influenced by an interplay of social hierarchies. Patterns of student motives for study abroad (and satisfaction of study abroad) seem to relate to the students' social status, the position of the home and host country higher education system on the international hierarchy of higher education systems and institutions, and the status and prestige of the institution they study at.

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<sup>23</sup> For a summary of main findings of this study see Kälvermark & Lindström, 1996:42-44.

This research, in spite of limitations due to the small sample is, to our knowledge, the only study that has placed student mobility for study abroad within a sociological perspective and provided a conceptual framework for a theoretical understanding of student choice to study abroad. This study has also stressed the differences of student mobility patterns across countries, higher education systems and institutions, and fields of study. It has also emphasised the role of policies developed by a variety of institutional actors (such as the EU, national states, and higher education institutions or departments) that set the stage for student mobility and the role of the perceptions and views of students. It has not, however, provided explanations concerning why students value higher the acquisition of additional skills such as competencies in foreign languages, and international/intercultural skills. A reason for this may be that the role played by the massification of higher education, its impact on labour market entry and of the growing social demand for such skills in labour markets increasingly shaped by the processes of globalisation and European integration were not taken into account by the researchers.

The OECD has stressed the role of the language of instruction in mobile students' choices of destination countries. Specifically, the OECD takes the view that 'an important factor in selecting a country in which to study is likely to be the availability of a common language. The dominance of Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States in the receipt of foreign students is to a large extent, attributable to the fact that English is the medium of instruction in these countries and the language that students intending to study abroad are most likely to know. Many institutions in non-English speaking countries provide courses in English to attract students from abroad' (OECD, 2000:179-180). In addition, the OECD argues that patterns of student mobility flows are influenced by 'a variety of 'push' and 'pull' factors such as language barriers, the academic reputation of particular institutions or programmes abroad, the flexibility of programmes with respect to counting time spent abroad towards degree requirements, the limitation of higher education provision in the home country, restrictive policies of university admissions at home, financial incentives and costs of tuition etc. These patterns also reflect geographical and historical links between countries, future job opportunities, cultural aspirations and government policies to facilitate credit transfer between home and host institutions. The transparency and



flexibility of courses and requirements for degree also count in the choice of institutions.' (2000:181).

The factors identified by the above OECD studies, however, can provide a partial understanding of patterns of mobile student flows in a rather cumulative way. This array of factors does not inform about possible variation among students and their reasons for studying abroad, and selecting a specific place abroad. Nor do they inform us about how specific national, social, and educational contexts, pertaining to specific home and host countries, might influence student choices, patterns of student motives, and flows of mobile students. Moreover, such factors do not explain the growth of mobile student numbers, or the growing social demand for study abroad. In addition, although the OECD stresses the role played by the English language in student mobility flows, it assigns to it a rather restrictive role. This view is also repeated in a more recent OECD publication. In OECD (2002a) it is again stressed that 'the dominance of English-speaking countries...may be largely attributable to the fact that students intending to study abroad are most likely to have learned English in their home country' (p. 238). This restrictive role of English language fails to acknowledge - as this Thesis argues in later chapters - the fact that a good command of English language is itself a reason for choosing to study abroad in an English speaking country.

In a more recent study of the growth of cross-border education (OECD, 2002c) the OECD argues that the factors influencing student choice to study abroad include the accessibility and variety of post-secondary studies in the home country, the language of the host country and in which courses are provided, the geographical and cultural proximity between the host and home countries, historical links, support networks such as past and present students from the home country, the reputation and perceived quality of educational institutions or education as a whole in the host country, the transferability and/or recognition of qualifications between the home and host countries, the cost of study abroad compared to the cost at home (including tuition fees, costs of living, availability of financial support), the infrastructure and social benefits for students in the host country (health cover, accommodation, language centres, right to social security), immigration (visa) policy towards foreign students

and especially the possibility to work while studying and to stay in the host country after graduation, and labour market opportunities in the host country (p. 103).

Again, however, the cumulative way that the OECD arrays the factors influencing student choice to study in a country other than their own does not explain the growing mobile student numbers, differences between students and their motives for studying abroad and selecting the place to study abroad, and the role played by contextual social and national factors. Although the OECD notes the comparative advantage of English-speaking countries, it does not explain the ways the language factor influences student choice to study in English speaking countries. It must also be noted that the factors relating to social benefits and immigration policy, clearly, do not apply to EU students studying or wishing to study in another EU country. Furthermore, the OECD points out that 'students' decisions about undertaking study in another country involve balancing the costs of study against the expected benefits, both monetary and non-monetary, arising from study overseas compared with study in their home country' (OECD, 2002c:102-103). In such benefits the OECD includes 'the broader opportunities in terms of perceived quality and coverage of courses compared to their home country and the advantage of having a better understanding of the world beyond their home country' (p.103). It does not, however, explain how study abroad and a better understanding of the world 'advantages' those students that choose to study abroad, nor it explains whether, how and why such advantages are recently being valued higher by a growing number of students that choose to study abroad.

## ***6 Research on student motives in the UK***

In the UK context, three studies appear to have been carried out on student motives for study abroad and for selecting the UK. Blaug and Woodhall (1981) with a sample of 1484 overseas students (interviewed using a questionnaire) studying in Britain examined how and why students had come to study in Britain. The most frequent reasons given were that they believed that British qualifications were better for jobs or study (23%), the course was not available in their home country (22%), the higher quality of courses in Britain (17%), and their application not accepted at home (7%). Interestingly, the wish to improve their English language competence was given as

main reason only by 2% of students while the fact that they speak English better than other foreign languages was given by 3% of students. Some differences were found between groups of students. Specifically, 'in the case of postgraduate students, 30 to 32% said that such a course was not available in their own country, whereas only 16% of undergraduates said this; they were more likely to cite, as reasons for coming to Britain, the superiority of British qualifications (25%), or courses (16%). More than half of all overseas students had made a careful comparison, between courses in Britain and elsewhere. 89% of MPhil or PhD students who had made such comparison had considered courses in North America, and amongst undergraduates it was 70%. The next most 'popular' area was Western Europe, but few students said they had considered Eastern Europe or Latin America (1981:250).

Williams et. al. (1986) sought to assess the effect of the introduction of full-cost fees for overseas students studying in UK universities with a survey (using structured interviews) of 1760 overseas students studying in universities, polytechnics, and other advanced further education colleges in England and Wales. This research found that the most frequent reasons given by students for choosing to study in Britain were: i) the course they wanted to do was not available or accessible in their home country (23%) ii) they believed that British qualifications were better for future jobs or study, and iii) they believed that the course was better than courses at home or elsewhere with 15%. Again, the role of English language was given by only a small minority of students (4%). As, however, Williams notes elsewhere (1987a: 24) this proportion differed considerably between countries with, for example, 41% of French students and 25% of German students that stated their wish to improve their English language competence as prime reason for selecting to study in the UK. Again, however, no interpretation of such differences was provided.

Comparing the findings with those of the Blaug and Woodhall (1981) research, the Williams et. al. study concluded that 'the main difference between 1980 and 1985 was that the percentage of those who said they came to Britain mainly because they had been offered a scholarship or other award rose from 3 percent to 13 percent. This was a particularly important influence on postgraduate students; 23 percent of postgraduate research students gave this as the main reason for coming to Britain to study' (1986:23).

More recently, motivations for study abroad and for selecting the UK were examined by Allen and Higgins in the context of the Heist research (Allen and Higgins, 1994). The scope of this research was limited to include only full-time undergraduate and thick sandwich (i.e. one academic year), first degree and other undergraduate students studying in UK higher education institutions. Moreover, respondents came from 14 selected non-EU countries (Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Cyprus, Norway, Kenya, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Taiwan, Turkey, Indonesia, Thailand). Students from EU countries and postgraduate students were not included in this research. Using a postal questionnaire 1200 students (response rate 32%) were asked to give their reasons for studying in Britain. The study found six main factors influencing student choice to study abroad rather than in their home country. These included a desire for cultural communication, the quality of studies and qualifications abroad, their professional aspirations, non-accessibility of higher education at home, family influences, and the non-availability of courses at home. Specifically, the 'opportunity to travel/experience other cultures' was the most frequent reason given by students with 67.8%. This was followed by 58.7% of students who stated as a reason the wish 'to receive a better quality education' and 43.3% who stated 'Better job prospects in home country if you have a qualification from overseas'. Significant minorities also mentioned that it was 'difficult to get into university/college in home country-too much competition/too few places' (39.2%), 'better facilities/environment overseas' (29%), 'family influence' (20.9%), 'course not available in home country' (14.3%). Some differences were found amongst students from different countries concerning their main reasons for studying abroad. Among them were cultural communication and the quality of studies that were the two most important reasons for students except for students from Singapore, Hong Kong, Norway, Cyprus, and Indonesia. Students from Hong Kong stated most frequently (65%) access difficulties faced at home while students from Singapore gave this reason more often (62%) than the overall students. Cypriot students stated as a reason, well beyond average, their job prospects with a qualification from overseas (with 71%). The prospect for better jobs was also given more frequently than average by students from Thailand (67%), Turkey (67%), Indonesia (55%), and Malaysia (51%).

The main factors influencing the choice of the UK as the place to study abroad, identified by the Allen and Higgins study were: the English language spoken (67%),

the recognition of UK qualifications by home government (65%) and companies (64%), the standard and quality of education (63%), the reputation of UK education, well known UK universities (44%), familiarity with UK system of education (41%). Again, some differences were found amongst students from different countries. English language was given as reason for selecting the UK more than average by students from Taiwan (84%), Norway (81%), Thailand (78%), and Malaysia (70%). Those below average were students from New Zealand (33%), Canada (44%), Kenya (54%), and Indonesia (55%). The standard and quality of education was given as a reason more often than the average by students from Malaysia (77%), Kenya (76%), Thailand (74%). Those below average were students from Norway (38%), New Zealand (44%), Taiwan (47%), Japan (49%), Turkey (53%), Indonesia (55%), Canada (56%), Hong Kong (57%). Allen and Higgins conclude 'it is important that international students are not seen as a set or homogeneous group. Students from each country tend to have different perceptions, needs and expectations, largely formed by their culture and previous educational experiences' (p. 103). The Allen and Higgins study does not provide systematic analysis and explanations of the main patterns and differences in student motives for studying abroad and selecting the UK. Although the most important reason for selecting the UK was found to be the English language spoken they do not clarify whether this relates to the fact that English is the only foreign language they command or whether it is the language they wish to improve. Finally, students from EU countries were excluded from the research.

## ***Conclusions***

The review has shown that foreign study and student mobility have been approached in different ways in different historical, policy and social contexts. It has also shown that recent studies approach student mobility as forming part of the wider process of higher education internationalisation. Internationalisation of higher education is seen as policy, institutional and social response to the broader socio-economic and political processes and challenges of globalisation and/or emerging patterns of regional co-operation, such as the process of European integration. In this context mobile students are approached as agents of institutional and social change. Research in this context does not, however, explain how such processes affect students' educational choices to

study abroad and to select specific places to study abroad. Moreover, it is also rather striking that despite the growing policy interest in this area, little research has recently been carried out examining different aspects of student mobility and offering updated knowledge, with the exception of the economic aspects of student mobility. Such economic approaches, however, have mostly sought to examine costs of the education of mobile students, and not economic aspects of cross-border mobility for the purposes of study, nor the longer term costs and benefits of such mobility.

The review has also shown that although empirical research on student motives for choosing to study in a country other than their own is growing, little evidence-based theoretical development has been provided on the social factors influencing such educational choices. Moreover, although such empirical research has shown that student motives vary across countries no interpretation attempts have been made to allow for such differences. It can, therefore, be argued that this lack of theoretical development and understanding probably reflects the fact that empirical research in this area has mainly been carried out in the context of policy evaluation research programmes. This may also explain the emphasis of such studies on students studying abroad within mobility schemes, including mainly students studying abroad for a period, and less on those students that study abroad on their own initiative and, in most cases, with a view to obtain a degree in the host country. Such a paucity of research and theoretical development, the review has shown, is also evident in the UK context. While this study seeks to provide an evidence-based and theoretically informed understanding of the social dynamics of student mobility in the EU, it is also this gap in research in the UK context, that strives to fill in.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Theoretical underpinnings of the Thesis and main concepts used**

#### **Introduction**

This Chapter presents the approach on student mobility adopted in the context of this investigation, discusses the theoretical underpinnings of the Thesis and clarifies main concepts used in data analysis. Emphasis is given on the concepts of i) student mobility approached as social action resulting in the structuration of the European educational space, and ii) the processes of European integration and globalisation and their main dimensions. A theoretical discussion is also provided on the role of social hierarchies in social action with particular reference to educational hierarchies and educational choices in mass higher education systems. As this research focuses on EU students studying in UK universities emphasis is also given on the UK higher education system and its systemic and social integration within the UK national, European and international context. Finally, the last section of this chapter presents the main research questions and hypotheses examined in this research.

#### **1 Student mobility, the structuration of the European educational space, European social integration.**

This investigation set out to provide a theoretically informed empirical understanding of the dynamics of student mobility in the EU. The underlying argument of the Thesis is that a better understanding of the dynamics and variable patterns of student mobility flows in the EU can be provided by focusing on students and examining their choice to study abroad and their choice of a specific country and higher education institution abroad. The Thesis takes that student choice to study abroad, although an individual one, is influenced by certain social factors involved in student educational choice formation. Therefore, this research approaches mobile students as social actors and examines the social factors influencing their choice to study abroad. The

identification, analysis and theoretical understanding of such social factors can contribute to a better understanding of the social dynamics of student mobility in the EU.

In the context of this research student mobility is approached as a social action that forms part of the wider process of higher education internationalisation in the European Union. Internationalisation of national higher education systems and institutions is a wider and growing process including a range of social actions with an international dimension developed within higher education institutions. Student choice to study abroad for a period of study, a full degree or for complete (undergraduate and postgraduate) higher level learning can be described as a social process and phenomenon that effects in the growing internationalisation of the higher education student population, the complete or partial internationalisation of higher education learning processes, and the denationalisation of higher education systems in the EU (Teichler, 1999). Therefore, the stance taken in the context of this investigation, is that an understanding of the social dynamics of student mobility can contribute to our understanding of the social dynamics of the broader process of higher education internationalisation, the denationalisation of higher level study and learning processes, and of the student population of higher education institutions.

The choice to focus on mobile students and seeking to understand their educational choices that transcend national borders, distances us from a national perspective of society and brings us closer to what Beck defines as sociology of globalisation. Specifically, as Beck argues 'with multidimensional globalisation, it is not only a new set of assumptions and cross-connections between states and societies which comes into being. Much more far-reaching is the break down of the basic assumptions whereby societies and states have been conceived, organised and experienced *as territorial units separated from one another*. Globality means that the unity of national state and national society comes unstuck; new relations of power and competition, conflict and intersection, take shape between on the one hand, national states and actors, and on the other hand, between transnational actors, identities, social spaces, situations, and processes' (Beck, 2000, p. 21).



Student mobility and higher education internationalisation have a rather global dimension. Instead, however, of a global perspective this research adopts a European focus and examines educational choices and actions of students from those European countries involved in the process of European integration. Such a methodological choice is not simply based on practical reasons. It has also significant conceptual implications. At a global level, the European Union is the regional structure that has achieved the greatest degree of integration among its members. The concept, however, of European 'integration' has been primarily used to describe the process of integration of European national economies (European economic integration), or the process of developing European political institutions (European political integration). This research, however, focuses on the social dimension of the European integration process. *In the context of this study, European social integration refers to the growing process of closer interaction and rapprochement of national, and transnational social actors and social systems in the EU, by which new relations of power and competition, conflict and intersection take shape, and structures, processes, institutions, social spaces, and identities emerge.*

Such a conceptual perspective allows for student mobility and higher education internationalisation in the EU to be placed within the wider concept of European social integration. From such a perspective student choice to study abroad and student mobility can be conceptualised as social processes by which new social structures, spaces, relations, institutions, and identities emerge. Specifically, in the context of this research student mobility and higher education internationalisation are approached as social actions and processes through which a European educational and social space is structured and gradually expanding. The European educational space is a social space of transnational actions that 'arise in one way or another because actors set out to achieve them' (Beck, 2000:26). Therefore, the specific focus on mobile students within the EU and their choice to study in another EU country allows us to approach them not only as social actors of the European higher education internationalisation process but also as social actors of the European educational space and of the European social integration process. It can, therefore, be argued that an understanding of the social dynamics of student mobility in the EU, can shed light not only on the dynamics of the higher education internationalisation process in the EU

but also on the structuration of the European educational space. Such a methodological and conceptual perspective allows us to also examine and analyse the social characteristics of the European educational space, the social relations taking shape between national social actors, systems, and institutions in the EU, and the social dynamics of the European integration process<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, this research may be better viewed and placed within a sociology of European integration.

European integration, when viewed as a whole, is a complex social process involving actions of multiple collective and individual actors acting at different levels. The structuration of the European educational space is a transnational social space that is the outcome of actions of different actors with complex relations and unequal resources at their disposal. The main collective and institutional actors of the European educational space include European Union institutions (and other international organisations active in this field e.g. the Council of Europe, OECD, UNESCO), national governments, transnational corporations and business associations, higher education institutions and departments, international associations and networks of higher education institutions. Individual actors include mainly politicians and administrators acting at European or national level institutions, academics, other higher education institution staff, and students. Policies and strategies for the internationalisation of higher education institutions and systems developed by collective actors at the European (or other international), national, or the institutional level rely heavily on the actions and responses of such collective or individual actors<sup>2</sup>.

The stages involved in student mobility and the creation of the European educational space can be broken down into i) reflection and choice formation, ii) departure and

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<sup>1</sup> For an early analysis of effects and outcomes of higher education internationalisation see Wende (1996). The individual and social effects of educational mobility (also including its relevance to the construction of European identity) are beyond the scope of this research. It must, however, be noted that such effects of mobility must be systematically studied before concepts of denationalisation of higher level learning processes and higher education systems acquire a more concrete meaning. This point is particularly crucial as, it can be argued, that sciences and universities have historically been 'borderless'.

<sup>2</sup> For an early discussion of the roles and functions of different actors in the development and implementation of policies for higher education internationalisation see also Wende, 1997.

arrival, and iii) integration (successful or not) of social actors in the hosting social and educational space. This research focuses on the stage of student choice formation and seeks to analyse the social factors that influence such choice and action i) to study in an educational institution which is part of a higher education system other than one's own country system and ii) to select a specific institution among different countries' systems and institutions.

## **2 Hierarchies and social action**

A central analytic concept in the context of this research is the concept of hierarchies and their relation to social action. Mouzelis (Mouzelis, 1995, 1991) has investigated the role of social hierarchies and social orders in social action and has shown how they can bridge micro and macro-level social theories. In particular, Mouzelis has developed his thesis in relation to, and as critic of, the central argument of Giddens' structuration theory (Giddens, 1979) and, particularly, on the relationship of social agents and social structures. Giddens' structuration theory suggests that social structures, as sets of rules and resources, are the medium but also the outcome of the social behaviour that they structure. Social structures are rather 'internal' than 'external' to social actors and they are materialised in their social behaviour. Therefore, Giddens argues, there is no dualism between structure and agency but a duality of structure.

Mouzelis, however, argues that there are cases where the relationship of social actors to social structures cannot be represented within the concept of the duality of structure. These are mainly cases where social actors distance themselves from social structures in order, particularly, to reflect on them or develop social strategies to sustain or alter them. Therefore, an understanding of social action must take into account not only the duality of structure but also the dualism of agent and structure. Mouzelis' post-structurationist<sup>3</sup> alternative thesis is concerned with taking distance from teleological thinking of social evolution, resisting different forms of

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<sup>3</sup> For a critical discussion of post-structurationist theoretical advancements see Parker, 2000. As Parker argues the advancements made by Mouzelis (and Archer) on the relation of structure and agency have outdated Giddens' structuration theory.

reductionism and reification (typical of functional and Marxist approaches) or individualistic voluntarism in the relation of structure and agency. Mouzelis, from a more Weberian perspective, argues that in modern complex and bureaucratically organised societies social agents relate unevenly to social structures, as they have unequal resources at their disposal. Such unequal distribution of resources among social actors is mainly caused by the hierarchical organisation of modern bureaucratic societies.

Therefore, central to Mouzelis' thesis are the concepts of system and social integration for they reveal how and why social actors relate unevenly to social structures and social systems. System integration refers to the relationships among systemic parts (institutions) while social integration refers to the relationships among social actors. Social institutions are structured hierarchically through bureaucratic organisation or market mechanisms. Social actors are ranked on the basis of their social status and prestige. The social structure of modern bureaucratic societies is characterised by hierarchically structured complex and multidimensional spaces of social positions. Social action of collective or individual social agents is associated and influenced by such social and institutional positions but they are not reduced to them. Significant are also i) the set of social dispositions that actors acquire through various forms of socialisation (*habitus*), and ii) the positional and the interactive-situational dimension (Mouzelis, 1997:136). Mouzelis drawing on Bourdieu's theory on the different types of capital (economic, cultural, social, symbolic) and their unequal social distribution among collective or individual social actors argues that social actors struggle to maintain or increase some of these types of capital. Mouzelis (also drawing on Parsons) suggests that Bourdieu's typology of capital and respective hierarchies must be modified as follows: i) economic, ii) political (referring to political influence), iii) social (referring to social status and prestige) and iv) cultural (referring to the field of culture, also including academic hierarchies).

Mouzelis also argues that institutional and social hierarchies have important implications for social action and in the construction or reconstruction/change of social realities. First, the contribution of different individual or collective actors in shaping social outcomes is unequal. Second, hierarchies influence strategies actors

develop. Of particular interest in the context of this research is Mouzelis' argument about such strategies of social actors. In the case of more fragmented and diffuse hierarchical relations where actors are ranked in terms of their social prestige (and not because of bureaucratic or market linkages) superordinate players tend to develop strategies in order to preserve their exclusive access to economic, social or cultural resources. Subordinate actors, on the contrary, develop strategies against such exclusive controls and privileges. 'If players succeed in considerably increasing one of the four types of capital, they may then not only become able to contribute more decisively to the game they are playing, but they may also move up and become participants in hierarchically superior games entailing much higher stakes. If winners move up, losers will have to move down and become participants in hierarchically lower-grade games that entail rather more petty rewards or profits' (Mouzelis, 1997:142). Social action is thus depicted as a social 'game' taking place within institutional and social hierarchies, by players with unequal resources at their disposal aimed at maintaining or increasing some type of capital.

Depending on the position of actors in such hierarchies social games are played at macro, meso or micro levels. In such social games superordinate actors influence the games of subordinate actors by setting limits and creating opportunities for them through bureaucratic or market mechanisms. In the case of hierarchical relations based on social status and prestige, superordinate actors influence subordinate actors through mimetic mechanisms, providing 'reference groups that set standards, models, and lifestyles to be emulated' (1995:143).

### **3 Hierarchies, educational systems and educational choices**

The relationship of educational systems with social hierarchies and social stratification has been extensively stressed and analysed within the sociology of education from different theoretical perspectives<sup>4</sup>. Mouzelis theoretical synthesis provides fruitful theoretical and conceptual alternatives for understanding how social and institutional hierarchies relate to educational systems and actors' educational

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<sup>4</sup> For an early critical analysis of such conflict and functional theories see Craig (1971).

choices. From a systemic integration perspective, educational systems are hierarchically organised and structured in different levels i.e. primary, secondary, tertiary. The institutional hierarchy is reflected not only on the different rights and privileges among different level institutions (e.g. administration, staff recruitment, curriculum development, salaries) but also on the prerequisite that admission to a higher level is conditioned by successful completion of lower levels. The level of expertise and curriculum content in different educational levels is also important. From the perspective of social integration, educational systems are also hierarchical. Social hierarchy is reflected on the social status and prestige of teaching staff and school leavers and graduates of different levels.

Of particular interest in the context of this research is not only the notion of stratification of the educational system as a whole but also, the notion of the internal stratification of the higher education system. As Trow argues (Trow, 1984), from a systemic viewpoint, higher education is internally stratified among different institutions. Although, differences pertain across countries, such hierarchies generally reflect the different state-awarded rights and privileges including, for example, the degree of autonomy, self-governance, and administration as well as the right to award different level degrees and diplomas. Such differences can also be found with respect to size and resources as well as the formal student admission criteria required. Internal differentiation and stratification of higher education systems is largely the outcome of expansionary higher education policies with functional differentiation adopted in developed countries in the 1960s and 1970s onwards across most developed countries. From such a systemic viewpoint traditional universities have a higher position than other institutions of higher education (Trow, 1984:134).

From the perspective of social integration, higher education systems are also hierarchical. The internal social stratification of higher education systems is reflected on the social status and prestige of different higher education institutions, and disciplines and their reputation based on their perceived academic standing (Trow, 1984:134). Trow also notes that such social hierarchies can vary across different countries. Country differences in the internal social stratification of higher education systems have also been discussed by Neave in relation to what he defines as French

exceptionalism in Western Europe. Specifically, Neave argues that "by the extreme complexity of its structure, its organisational stratification and its differentiation, the French higher education system is remarkable in Western Europe. French exceptionalism...emerges in the form of that profound duality between specialised schools, given over to the preparation of state service on the one hand and the university on the other. Such a duality is not a passing thing and has, rather, been a deeply embedded feature of higher education over the past two centuries. Whereas in most other systems of higher education in Western Europe the vocational domain has largely been subordinate to the domain of learning, in France the situation was inversed. To be sure the university was never subordinate to the *Grandes Ecoles*, neither legally, nor organisationally. But the basic vocational clarity of commitment to supply the highest posts in state service afforded a social superiority and as we have seen from some of the characteristics of student flows, an intellectual superiority as well to the non-university domain' (1999:64). Explaining the distinctive characteristics of the hierarchical social stratification of the French higher education system Neave points to the role played by historical factors but also to the high social background of students that have traditionally been selecting to study at the *Grandes Ecoles*, and the symbolic value of competitive admission processes to the high positioned parts of the system. Neave's analysis is illustrative of the relative autonomy of system and social hierarchical integration of higher education systems and the role historical factors play in such structuration processes in different national contexts.

Following Mouzelis it can be argued that educational choices of students can be seen as social actions aimed at increasing the cultural capital of students in the struggle and social competition for entry into and development within the labour market and the hierarchies of occupations. Bourdieu has not only distinguished between different types of capital but also different forms of capital. Specifically, Bourdieu (1997) has argued that cultural capital can exist in three forms i) the embodied state i.e. long-lasting dispositions of the body and mind (*habitus*), ii) the objectified state i.e. in the form of cultural goods, and iii) the institutionalised state, such as educational qualifications that is presumed to guarantee properties of cultural capital.

Educational qualifications, as the institutionalised form of cultural capital have a relative autonomy of the bearer, can impose recognition, and make it possible to compare and even exchange holders. It also makes it possible to establish conversion rates between cultural capital and economic capital, guaranteeing a monetary value in the labour market. The labour market and its hierarchical occupational structure is thus the social space where cultural capital is converted into economic or social capital in the form of social prestige. The material and symbolic profits cultural capital -in the form of educational qualifications- yields also depend on its scarcity. Thus, Bourdieu argues social strategies for converting economic capital into cultural capital 'are governed by changes in the structure of the chances of profit offered by the different types of capital' (1997:51). This process, for Bourdieu, lies at the heart of the schooling explosion and what he calls 'inflation' of qualifications. Bourdieu's depiction of educational demand and choices assimilate more Weberian explanations of growing educational demand and expansion emphasising on social processes and educational credentialism (Collins, 1979) resulting from social conflicts among status groups for social mobility<sup>5</sup>. Such a depiction allows also to argue that student higher educational choices, strategies and actions can also be influenced by their perceptions of the conditions and structure of labour markets as social spaces shaping student chances for successful conversion of cultural capital (higher educational qualifications) into other types of capital in the hierarchy of occupations and social hierarchies.

#### **4 Higher education choice in mass higher education systems**

Higher education systems in Western European countries (and other developed countries) have been expanding particularly since the 1960s. Differences in pace, institutional outcomes, and policy instruments used in this process across different countries do not significantly dispute the uniformity of this social evolution across EU countries and their educational systems.<sup>6</sup> Among the most unequivocal social effects

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<sup>5</sup> For a recent review of Weberian theory of educational credentialism see Brown 2001.

<sup>6</sup> Different approaches have been put forward to explain this process of structural educational and social change. A detailed discussion of such approaches is beyond the scope of this research. For such



of this process are the wider democratisation of access to higher level learning, particularly with increased participation of women and students of lower socio-economic background. Massification of higher education systems also affects the scarcity of higher education qualifications and the chances for the material and symbolic profits cultural capital (higher education qualification) yield. As Blackburn and Jarman have also argued (Blackburn & Jarman, 1993) 'when degrees were held by less than 2% of the labour force, they may have been extremely important for the careers of the qualified men and women but they were rare to have a major impact on the labour market as a whole. As the number of graduates has grown the degree has become an increasingly common entry qualification for a growing number of high level occupations' (p. 205).

Williams (1985) in relation to the UK, has argued that expansion has, on the one hand, increased vocationalism in higher education while, on the other hand, it generates higher social demand for study at higher education level. Moreover, such closer relationship of higher education qualifications to labour market and social stratification seems to affect educational choices of students and particularly the social criteria by which such choices are made, increasing their credential social character of higher education qualifications and student choices. Furth (1982), in relation to changing labour market conditions and higher education choices, had noted as early as 1980s that 'the dominance of strictly academic criteria has declined at the same time as growing importance is being assigned to the employment value of different types of higher education...Thus a different order of preferences seems to have emerged: the ranking of institutions and programmes in the new hierarchy is still conditioned by their academic standing but also, and to a far greater extent than previously, by their perceived job relevance' (p. 147).

The closer relationship of mass higher education and labour market is also reflected on the policy discourse and policy reforms with increased emphasis on the need for higher education responsiveness to labour market needs, and on the need for

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theoretical discussions see, for example, Windolf (1997), Kaiser & de Weert (1994), Trow (1973, 1981).

efficiency and accountability of public and private investment in higher education. It is also reflected in the increased interest of higher education researchers and the growing number of empirical studies carried out. Such research has taken two main directions, the systemic (macro) level, and the students as actors (micro) level. System level research focuses on the interface of higher education and labour market seeking to examine the transition of graduates to labour market, across different institutions, fields of study, and countries<sup>7</sup>. Actor based social research has sought to examine higher educational choices of students, drawing mainly on Bourdieu's theory of social and cultural capital. For example, such research in the UK context, has argued that familial and institutional habituses of gender, race, and class are in play in student's higher education choices (Reay, 1988). Ball (2002, 2003) has analysed middle-class strategies and higher education choice and has stressed how the middle classes use the different forms of capital in their educational choices.

## **5 System and social regulation of the social demand for higher education across EU countries**

The social demand for study at higher education level is controlled and regulated with systemic or social mechanisms. Such mechanisms set different structures of opportunities and limits to students seeking to maximise their cultural capital in the social struggle for successful entry and development within the hierarchy of occupations and social hierarchies. Some understanding of such mechanisms across EU countries is therefore useful, as they may influence students' educational choices to study in another EU country.

Different institutional mechanisms regulating the social demand for study at higher education level are in place across EU countries. Such variation in higher education accessibility ranges from strongly selective to non-selective, open entrance procedures across all or some subjects or types of institutions as well as levels of study (i.e. undergraduate, postgraduate, research degrees). For example, in Greece and Ireland

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<sup>7</sup> For such studies see, for example, Brennan et al (1993, 1996), Kogan & Brennan (1993), Teichler (1994, 1997, 1998, 1998), Teichler & Maiworm (1994, 1997), Kivinen (1997), Dolton & Vignoles (1997), Dreijemanis (1997).

numerical limits (*numerus clausus*) are set by the state across all subjects and institutions. In Germany and France, although holders of secondary education qualification (Abitur, Baccalaureat) have the right to enrol into higher education for a first degree, special restrictions and admissions procedures may apply to certain subjects (e.g. medicine, engineering, etc.) or types of higher education institutions (e.g. the French Grandes Ecoles). In countries with selective admissions systems at the level of institutions (e.g. UK) the overall number of students is also broadly controlled by the state (via agreements with institutions on the maximum number of students admitted). At the postgraduate levels admissions are generally selective across EU countries. Systemic regulation of the social demand for higher education study is, however, also regulated at lower levels of education with selection (competitive or not) exams procedures. Systemic regulation of such social demand may also take place within higher education. The French system with exams at the end of the first year in higher education is rather illustrative of this type of regulation.

Boezerooy & Vosensteyn (1999) examined higher education accessibility in nine EU countries in terms of their relative selectivity (range of programmes, selection criteria used, rate of rejection) and found that in Austria, Belgium (Flanders), France, and the Netherlands selection procedures are used in only a few programmes. In Denmark, although *numerus clausus* is limited selection is also applied, while in the UK and Finland such selection applies at all programmes. Criteria used in selection procedures include merit, as demonstrated in diplomas, school leaving or entrance exams results, contents of courses in secondary education, and professional experience. In most EU countries some combination of such merit criteria are used. In Sweden and Finland personal characteristics (e.g. age) are also used. Other criteria used include time waiting for admission (Germany, Denmark), additional tests or interviews ascertaining student motivations for particular studies (Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Sweden), and regional background (France). Rates of rejection also vary considerably across countries. Therefore, Boezerooy & Vosensteyn concluded that the most selective systems are found in Finland, Sweden, and the UK, followed by the Danish and German systems that are less selective. The least selective systems are found in the Flanders followed by Austria, and the Netherlands. France is singled out for most

of its public university sector is not selective at entrance but about a quarter of the system is highly selective.

The accessibility of national higher education system may also be defined by the degree of its expansion and integration with the provision (or not) of higher level (postgraduate) structures, qualifications, and programmes (e.g. doctoral programmes). For example, in Greece post graduate programmes have only emerged in the 1990s as part of the growing expansion of the system, providing Greek students the opportunity to pursue postgraduate studies within Greece.

The social demand for higher education study is also controlled socially<sup>8</sup>. Such social control relates to the unequal distribution of economic and cultural capital in the form of social dispositions (habitus) in modern societies. Such social dispositions influence perceptions held by students of, particularly, lower social background of the chances for upward social mobility. It may, however, be argued that such perceptions are not necessarily uniform across national societies and contexts. For, perceptions of the chances for social mobility pertaining in a national social context at a given time, may relate to the social and cultural structure of a national society, defined by national trajectories of social integration, the degree and rapidity of its social transformation, and/or employment conditions and labour market practices and requirements.

Systemic and social regulation of the social demand for higher education defines the degree of compatibility/incompatibility between demand and supply of higher education and determines the degree of accessibility and entry competitiveness of a national system at a given point in time. The accessibility of higher education systems sets limits or provide opportunities to students in the fulfilment of the social aspirations for cultural capital within their national social context. The degree of incompatibility, access competitiveness and rates of rejection may influence student educational choices and 'force' them to seek to fulfil their social aspirations in a more 'open' and accessible higher education system of another country.

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<sup>8</sup> Such social control of educational flows has been stressed particularly by Marxist approaches emphasising either the use of the state by the upper classes or their social hegemony over lower classes

## **6 The UK higher education system. System and social integration**

This research focuses on students from EU (other than the UK) countries studying in UK higher education institutions. Some understanding of the UK higher education system, its systemic characteristics, development and current functioning are, therefore, useful in understanding their role in student choices. For, in the actor-based perspective adopted in the context of this research, actors acting at the level of higher education institutions and departments, are also collective social actors of the internationalisation of higher education and the construction of the European educational space. As such collective actors their resources are bureaucratically determined by their relationships with the state as well as the internal organisation of institutions into departments, and institutes. Such institutional collective actors may be best seen as acting at a meso level also creating opportunities or setting restrictions to students, as subordinate social actors, in their educational choices. Drawing on Mouzelis and Trow we can argue that a better understanding of the role of UK higher education institutions must take into account both their systemic and social integration within the UK but also the EU, and wider international social context.

Specifically, from a systemic viewpoint the British system of higher education has been expanded in different historical periods broadly following the expansion process observed in higher education systems of - particularly - economically developed democracies. The British higher education system has evolved from a small number of institutions into a large system accessible by wider socio-economic cohorts of students and with a high volume of research production in international terms. Since 1960s expansion was achieved with the creation of a second type of higher education institutions (called polytechnics). Polytechnics had a more vocational as opposed to academic orientation, with no right to award research degrees, and less autonomy in their organisation and self-regulation than the university sector of the British binary system of higher education. In this process of expansion elite institutions (mainly Oxford and Cambridge universities) have served as models after which new

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(Gramsci). For a recent critic for determinism, economic reductionism and reification in such approaches see Mouzelis (1990).

institutions were established. This has been mostly reflected in the institutional autonomy over selective student admissions, qualifications and course development, the organisation of teaching with, particularly, small size classes and the tutorial system. Such organisational patterns of teaching, facilitate closer contact of teachers and students and constitute organisational characteristics structuring what Gellert (1993a) has defined as the 'personality model' of higher education structures in Europe. As Gellert also argues this educational model distinguishes the UK system (particularly the English one) from other European models of higher education and, specifically, the 'training model' of France and the 'research model' of Germany. Such models with their similarities and differences have resulted from different educational philosophies (Humboldtian, Newman, Napoleonic) and national historical processes of structuration (Archer, 1979). These models were also adopted and transferred across other European (and non-European) countries<sup>9</sup>, and after adjustment within national contexts and their evolution have resulted in what is called European educational diversities.

An understanding of the current functioning of the British system of higher education with respect to internationalisation and student recruitment (domestic, European, or international) must also take into account its present systemic integration and particularly, the reforms in the relationships of state and higher education institutions initiated in 1979. For, as Williams has argued, ever since the British higher education system has been through a process of radical change that provided the novel context within which higher education institutions currently function and act. These changes were mainly the outcome of intended and unintended consequences of governmental actions and the responses of the university and the non- university sector of British higher education to such policy changes (Williams, 1997). Specifically, governmental policies adopted and reforms introduced were (initially) characterised by severe public expenditure cuts, and (subsequently) the use of competitive funding mechanisms in public financing of research and teaching activities in higher education institutions. The introduction of market types of organisation (quasi-markets) and the use of

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<sup>9</sup> For example, the Greek higher education system is one example of such model transfer in the European context. Greek universities were modelled after the German model as far as the research orientation is concerned coupled with a French type of state centralised control.

financial incentives in steering higher education institutions have been more evident in Anglo-Saxon countries (e.g. Australia, New Zealand). Although in most other EU countries changes in state and higher education relationships have also been introduced and new 'steering' models have been put in place, the British type of marketisation, is quite distinct in the European context. The use of formula funding in public higher education financing based also on student numbers recruited has constituted a main element in what Williams has defined as 'the market route to mass higher education' characterising the UK case. Such competitive funding mechanisms and the differentiated fees structure for overseas and home (including EU resident) students, have provided British institutions with structural incentives to active marketing their activities at an international level and generate income. As Williams also argues British higher education institutions 'abandoned their previous passive attitude to foreign student recruitment and undertook vigorous recruitment drives. The dip in recruitment in 1982 and 1983 immediately following the fee increase, was soon recouped, and by 1987 there were more foreign students in British universities than in 1979. The polytechnics, which were not autonomous and were required to remit most of any fee income to local authorities which owned them, did not undertake aggressive marketing strategies until much later, and their foreign student recruitment remained low for much longer' (1997:276). From a systemic viewpoint since 1989 the binary system was abolished with polytechnics acquiring full legal independent status and autonomy to act in the British, European, and global context as traditional universities. In this market context, institutions seeking to attract students (from within or outside the UK) have also been induced to develop strategies to meet student preferences. Such collective institutional strategies and actions included the development of new, module-structured courses, improve information, adjust admissions and assessment criteria. Such institutional actions have effected in increased course diversification, transparency, and accessibility of UK institutions. Such institutional strategies have also given rise to new forms of internationalisation of higher education with, particularly, international franchising of higher education courses, validation of courses offered by educational institutions abroad, and the development of courses partially offered in the country of student origin and final completion within the UK. Such strategies and actions developed by higher education institutions acting at a meso level, may be seen as providing domestic and

international students with new opportunities or restrictions in their educational choices.

Two more aspects and dimensions from the perspective of systemic integration of British higher education institutions at the international and EU level are also important in understanding their role in creating opportunities and setting restrictions to students. First, the British membership to the European Union; Second, the recognition of UK qualifications by state and/or professional authorities in the EU and other countries outside the UK. As a result of the EU membership, British higher education institutions are eligible to participate in EU educational (and research) policy programmes. In this context, British institutions develop cooperative schemes with higher education institutions of other EU member countries (and non-EU countries participating in EU programmes). Such inter-university co-operation schemes may be seen as social structures and outcome of actions of meso-level actors (i.e. higher education institutions) that provide students, as subordinate actors, with opportunities to study abroad and obtain cultural capital in institutionalised form (e.g. credits). British higher education qualifications are generally formally recognised abroad, although special criteria may apply in each country.

From the perspective of social integration the British higher education system is hierarchical within the British national social context. British higher education institutions are socially stratified and are distinguished between elite and non-elite universities associated with different social status, prestige, academic standing, and reputation. The sources of such hierarchical stratification may also be found in historical and social factors associated with the high social background of students studying in elite universities and their close association with the education of the British elites.

The social stratification of British higher education institutions is also reflected in student flows admissions standards, and the degree of competitiveness of student entry. Elite universities are generally mostly sought after by students while non-elite institutions, associated with lower social status and prestige, may remain under-subscribed in terms of student numbers recruited (compared with targets set). Such



hierarchical differentiation appears to largely apply even after the formal abolition of the binary divide between universities and polytechnics. Polytechnics despite their systemic integration with the university sector (with their acquisition of university status, rights, and functions) are commonly referred to as 'new' universities in order to be distinguished from 'old' universities that are associated with higher social status, prestige, and academic standing. The social stratification of British higher education institutions is also reflected in the different strategies and actions developed within the regulatory context brought about by the 'market route to mass higher education' employed in the UK context. Existing evidence suggests that such strategies and institutional actions may be associated with the position of institutions, departments and disciplines in the hierarchy of institutions in their struggle to maintain or increase their position and cultural resources. Such actions can therefore be seen as meso-level social games with mimetic effects. As Williams (1997) has shown British higher education institutions have responded in different ways in the 'marketised' context created by governmental policies. Polytechnics, that are generally associated with lower social status, prestige, and academic standing have sought to improve their social status seeking to acquire research functions, traditionally associated with universities- a process called academic drift<sup>10</sup>- and to increase their economic and social capital (in the form of social prestige) attracting more students from the national or international market of students. Such economic capital may not, however, be seen as an end in itself but more as a means for institutions to increase their cultural capital. For, higher education institutions are not profit making corporations. Educational institutions may be best seen as being part of the cultural field of modern complex and differentiated societies, even when they operate in a marketised context. An increase of the economic capital of an educational institution may, therefore, be best seen as a prerequisite for an increase of their social and cultural capital in the form of their ranking and position in the national and international hierarchy of higher educational institutions. Such social hierarchies are also in play in the degree of responsiveness of higher education institutions to labour market and student needs and demands, particularly, as far as curriculum context, structure, and admissions processes are concerned. Attracting more students has also meant that institutions of

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<sup>10</sup> For discussions on the process of academic drift see for example Neave, 1979, Gellert (1993b).

lower status may be more prone to adjust their curricula and admissions processes to meet student needs.

From the perspective of social integration, British universities and, particularly, elite universities are placed high in the international hierarchy of higher education systems and institutions. Such international stratification may also be attributed to historical social factors. British universities have historically been international in their orientation and role also including their student intake. Students of elite social background, coming from different countries within or outside the British Empire and Commonwealth have historically been found to study in British universities. Moreover, the academic standing of British universities may also be due to the specific academic empirical tradition and epistemology developed (also referred to as Anglo-Saxon academic tradition) which distinguishes it from other Western traditions and ranks them high in the international cultural academic hierarchies.

There also exist some evidence indicating that there is within the EU an hierarchy of higher education systems based on academic standing, reputation, and prestige. Specifically, ERASMUS student surveys have found that former ERASMUS students from Northern European countries tended to self-rate the academic progress during the period of study abroad less positively than those from South European countries. Conversely, those studied in Northern European countries (including the UK but with the exception of Ireland) rated their academic progress and success more positively than those who had spent the period of study abroad in a South European country (see Teichler & Maiworm, 1994:27). It has also been found that former ERASMUS students from South European countries, notably those going to Northern European countries (also including the UK), considered the academic and professional knowledge acquisition during the study period abroad more useful in their employment than average, whereas students from North European countries who had spent the ERASMUS period in a South European country considered knowledge acquired less useful (Teichler & Maiworm, 1994, p.71).

## **7 Dimensions of globalisation and European integration and their effects on labour markets**

This research has adopted a transnational perspective and places social action within a context that transcends nationally defined borders. Further conceptual clarification is therefore needed particularly, for terms such as globalisation and European integration that shape the transnational social context that this research focuses on. Globalisation is a term that is recently being used widely in the social sciences. Some clarification of the term is, however, necessary as it is used differently and some times in competing ways in the existing globalisation literature (see Sklair, 1999). As Beck (2000) argues approaches on globalisation tend to be either mono-causal or multi-causal. Mono-causal explanations of globalisation tend to emphasise the role of a single dimension or logic of globalisation. Multi-causal explanations tend to emphasise multiple causes and dimensions. Wallerstein (1979) emphasises the role of economic forces in the world capitalist system and the international division of labour. Rosenau (1990), Gilpin (1987), and Held (1995) focus on international politics and point to the changing role of the nation-state in the international arena due to the international activities and roles played by international organisations, transnational interests, and transnational social movements. For Rosenau and Bauman (1998), central to this process are i) the technological transformation with communication technologies and ii) the advent of the science and information society that give international ties and dependence a new density. Giddens (1990, 1999) also defines globalisation as growing interdependence at a global level and stresses the role of economic (acceleration and expansion of global financial markets), political (the shifting nature of the nation-state), and cultural (global culture) factors and dimensions in this process. Giddens, however, assigns prime importance to the technological transformation and the information and communication technologies by which time and space are compressed, global views and planetary consciousness are shaping, and define the social contexts of late modernity.

In the globalisation literature, the process of European integration is recently attributed and associated with the 'dialectic' consequences of globalisation (see for example Beck, 2000). Specifically, the growing acceleration of European integration

in particular, is approached as the regional response to globalisation forces. In the European Union, the creation of a single European market with free mobility of capital, goods, services, and persons has increased the volume of intra-European economic transactions and trading. The development and enhancement of EU political institutions over national institutions, and the expansion of EU competences and policies over new policy areas, have also increased the density of transnational communication in the EU. Moreover, and probably the most distinctive dimension of the European integration process is the development of European law.

A critical analysis of the rapidly growing literature of globalisation and competing conceptions, definitions and approaches is beyond the scope of this study. Of relevance, however, in the context of this research are the main dimensions of globalisation as identified in the relevant literature: i) the technological transformation, and the advent of the science and information society, ii) the diffusion of information and communication technologies, iii) the increasing internationalisation of financial transactions and trading, and iv) the development of international and, particularly, European law. Specifically, globalisation and European integration processes, and their main dimensions, are approached from the perspective of their effects on national social contexts, labour market domains, and the ways they influence student educational choices to study abroad.

Specifically, existing empirical research suggests that employers' requirements appear to be influenced by processes of European integration and globalisation, increasingly demanding international skills in the recruitment practices. The HIS study (Müßig-Trapp and Schnitzer, 1997) carried out in Germany has examined job advertisements and analysed the labour market relevance of 'international' skills, such as English language competence, contact with foreigners, travelling abroad, and international experience. The research found that a total 40% of job advertisements demand proficiency in English language. The study also found some differences on employers' requirements for international skills across labour market segments. Specifically, it was found that 55% of job advertisements in engineering ask for English language competence. The respective percentage for business economics graduates was 45%, computer sciences 37%. English language competence was asked in lower

percentages in job advertisements for sociologists, political and social scientists (with less than a quarter of cases) while for architects and civil engineers less than 10%. English language competence was rarely required for jobs in education, psychology, and social work (3%). Moreover, the study found that, compared with English, the demand for other foreign languages tends to be low. It is, however, noteworthy that 15% of job advertisements for engineers required competence in two or more foreign languages, almost as high as for social scientists, while it was 12% for jobs in business.

Research (Hsv, 1999) carried out in Sweden involved interviews with 34 employers and sought to explore how they assess the value of study abroad of Swedish students. The study found that an absolute majority of companies had employed staff with experience of studies abroad but without having particularly requested it. It also concluded that 'in a situation where a company has to choose between persons who otherwise have the same qualifications, some companies said that they would choose the person who had studied abroad' (p. 33)

EU funded research carried out by Stein, J.A. et. al. (1996) also interviewed 46 internationally-oriented companies, involved in research and development activities in six European countries (France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the UK) and examined their viewpoints and needs for international education and training of qualified scientists in natural sciences, mathematics, computer science, and engineering. The study found that although employers recruited mostly on a national basis because they were familiar with national qualifications, they anticipated greater demand for internationally experienced scientists in future. It also found that although international experience is only rarely an explicit selection criterion, it is 'widely viewed as a positive indicator of personal qualities such as cultural flexibility and initiative that are desirable in an increasingly internationalised and competitive business environment' (p.11). It also found that the more senior the position the more likely the company is to require international experience. Most companies expressed interest in internationally experienced scientists but without having specific recruitment policies for attracting them. A significant minority, however, had explicit policies for recruiting internationally experienced scientists.

Indications of the role study abroad plays in graduate's transition to labour market have also been evident in research conducted on graduates having studied abroad within European programmes and their employment after graduation. The graduate survey of the 'Study Abroad Evaluation Project' (Opper, S., et. al., 1990) has found that the reigning opinion among graduates was that the study period abroad had facilitated gaining first employment and career development. This view was strikingly similar across students from the four countries examined (UK, France, Germany, Sweden). Differences were, however, found across fields of study, with Business Studies and Engineering graduates giving the highest rate, followed by former Law students. Natural Sciences and Foreign Languages graduates giving a lower rate (p. 172). These findings have been further supported by the ERASMUS programme evaluation research examining former ERASMUS students' transition to work. Almost three-quarters (71%) of students noted a positive impact of study abroad on gaining their first job. About half of the students (49%) rated that their study period abroad had a positive impact on the type of jobs and tasks in which they were involved. It was also found that former students of business studies and of engineering reported the most positive impact (Teichler & Maiworm, 1994:64-72). Similarly, former ERASMUS students asked three years after return from the study period abroad assessed positively the benefits of study abroad for employment and work. Specifically, it was found that almost three-quarters of employed students felt that their period abroad was a positive factor in obtaining a first job. About half also perceived a positive impact on the type of job tasks in which they were involved. Graduates in business, engineering, law, and foreign languages stated higher that study abroad influenced their transition to employment (Teichler, U., & Maiworm, F., 1997:153).

The SOCRATES Evaluation 2000 project also examined the impact of study abroad on student careers and compared it to non-mobile students. As Jahr & Teichler argue (2000) although the transition process and the early career of those who had studied abroad and those that had not such international experience did not vary substantially, formerly mobile students were more successful in getting a job earlier than non mobile students (p. 109). Formerly mobile students changed employers more

frequently than the non-mobile students four years after graduation. The formerly mobile students were employed to a greater extent in the private sector, both in industry and services, and more often in large organisations (p. 111). Concerning the kind of job, it was indicated that the status and position of formerly mobile students was somewhat higher than non-mobile students. Income differences were also found with former mobile students earning more some four years after graduation than the non-mobile students (p. 111). This evidence rather suggests that in a social context of growing international communication brought about by forces of globalisation and European integration, recruitment practices and requirements are gradually affected as employers seek to increase their economic capital. Such labour market changes and conditions, may affect student's educational choices shaped in a context of mass higher education systems and higher education credentialism.

## **8 Research questions and hypotheses**

The Thesis adopts an actor-based and process oriented perspective and seeks to contribute to our understanding of the social dynamics of student mobility, higher education internationalisation and the structuration of the European educational space, that is the dynamics of European social integration. Such processes of social change involve actions of multiple social actors, acting at macro, meso or micro levels with unequal resources at their disposal. Although this research adopts a multi actor perspective, it takes a particular focus on EU mobile students, approached as micro level social actors. As Mouzelis argues superordinate social actors, acting at macro or meso level, provide subordinate actors with opportunities or set restrictions on them. Such opportunities or restrictions, as social structures, take the form of policies and regulations resulting from social games played by powerful actors at higher levels. The European educational space, however, emerges when students take-up opportunities provided to them by actions of superordinate actors acting at a European, national, or the level of higher education institutions. The specific focus on students and an understanding of their choices and actions allows also the evaluation of the role actions developed at higher levels play in the structuration of the European educational space and the process of European social integration.

Focusing on mobile students and seeking to understand their choice and action to study abroad the specific research questions/hypotheses examined are as follows: What are the social factors influencing students from different EU countries to study in a country other than their own? Are such factors similar across students from different EU countries? How the choice to study abroad increases student's cultural capital? Are there educational hierarchies across EU systems and institutions of higher education? What are the sources of such stratification of higher education systems and institutions in the EU and the social criteria by which systems and institutions are ranked? Has massification of higher education systems affected student perceptions, motives, and their choice to study abroad? How? To what extent growing internationalisation of labour markets and social contexts in the EU influence students in their educational choices? Does the diversity of higher education systems in the EU play a role in students' educational choices? How?

The Thesis has taken the case of EU (non-UK) students studying in UK universities. Therefore, it also seeks to examine the social factors influencing EU students in their choice to study in a UK university. Specifically, it seeks to examine the role systemic and social characteristics of the UK higher education system and institutions play in the choice of EU students. How such characteristics are perceived to increase student's cultural capital? Are they valued equally among students from different EU countries? Why? Does the 'marketisation' of UK higher education play a role in student choices? How?

A sub-theme of the Thesis is to provide a partial evaluation of the role played by superordinate actors and the outcomes of their actions in the development of student mobility and the construction of the European educational space. Specifically, it seeks to also examine how the social dynamics influencing students in their choice to study abroad compares with the existing policy and regulatory framework developed in the EU. Do the existing opportunities provided or restrictions set to students by European, national, and institutional level actors meet the social dynamics of student mobility in the EU? Or is it more the case that the social dynamics of student mobility transcend the existing policy framework?



## Chapter Three

### Flows, patterns, and trends in student mobility in the EU

#### Introduction

This chapter aims to give an overview of i) student mobility flows in the European Union, and ii) flows of mobile students from EU countries towards the UK. It also aims to explore whether there exist underlying factors across EU countries explaining mobile student flow patterns. Specifically, the first section examines European student mobility in the global context and shows the high and growing regionalisation of intra-European student mobility. The second section, adopting an over time perspective, compares student flows within EU countries between early 1980s and mid-1990s, and identifies main patterns and trends in intra-European student mobility flows<sup>1</sup>. It shows that intra-European student mobility is on the increase and a major change of flows direction has occurred towards the UK. The third section examines data on mobile student flows and patterns within the SOCRATES-ERASMUS (and other EU mobility programmes). It confirms asymmetries of student flows across EU countries and the high popularity of the UK among ERASMUS mobile students.

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<sup>1</sup> Note of caution. The data on foreign student flows presented in this section are based on data held and published by international organisations (UNESCO, OECD, EUROSTAT). UNESCO has long been collecting and publishing such data while the OECD and EUROSTAT have shown such interest since early 1990s reflecting the growing policy interest in international mobility of students. Despite improvement over time, such data are not without problems concerning particularly methods and definitions used. International organisations rely on national definitions, coverage, collection methods, and reporting of countries hosting mobile students. As a result definitions and classifications used do not necessarily match across countries and, therefore, comparisons at an international level must be treated with caution. In particular, national definitions of foreign students vary as certain countries use nationality to define students as 'foreign' (e.g. Germany), country of permanent residence (e.g. UK) or qualification held by students (e.g. Portugal). In addition, in some cases only students on full-time courses are included. Differences in structure of educational systems across countries, and reforms introduced may also make international comparisons difficult (and especially over time comparisons), as data may not necessarily include all similar types of institutions. This is particularly the case for the non-university sector of tertiary education. Furthermore, these data do not distinguish between students studying in another country for a degree to be obtained abroad and students studying abroad only for a period (e.g. student exchanges). In addition, such published data do not always allow student flows by level of study abroad (i.e. undergraduate or postgraduate), to be examined. Finally, not all countries collect data on foreign students on an annual basis. Despite such limitations some broad trends and patterns in student mobility can be identified. For an analysis of limitations and problems of international data on student mobility in the EU see also Dimitropoulos and West, 1999.

The fourth section analyses main characteristics and trends in mobility of EU students towards the UK, the most popular destination country among EU mobile students. Specifically, it examines data on EU students studying in public-funded UK universities, (held by the UK Higher Education Statistical Service, and the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service), and explores EU domiciled student enrolments and applications (undergraduate level only) to study in the UK. It shows that EU student demand for study in UK universities is growing rapidly with large differences across subjects. The conclusions of this chapter, summarising main findings, also shows that no patterns across countries have been identified explaining student flows with probable exception some similarities in flows of Scandinavian students.

## **1 European student mobility in the global context**

A recent analysis carried out by the OECD (OECD, 2002b) provides, not only a broader perspective of student mobility in the OECD countries, but also the broader context of intra-European student mobility, and its place in a global perspective. According to the OECD study there were 1.5 million foreign students in OECD countries (in 1999), of whom 56% were from non-OECD countries. The USA is the most popular destination country, receiving almost one-third (450,000) of all students, followed by the UK (with over 200,000 international students). Other popular destination countries were Germany (with about 175,000 students), France (about 130,000 students), Australia (about 120,000), and Japan (about 50,000). Altogether, the USA, the UK, Germany, France, Australia, and Japan attract more than 75% of all foreign students in the OECD countries. Anglophone OECD countries (USA, UK, Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand) attract over half of foreign students in the OECD area.

This OECD study also examined the development of student mobility since 1980, using UNESCO data for 1980 and 1990 and OECD data for 1999. It found that the number of post-secondary foreign students in OECD countries has doubled over the past twenty years. The increase was dramatic in Australia with a relative decline in France, Canada, and the USA. The highest absolute number of foreign students, studying in the OECD area in 1999, come from China (98,813 students, and 7% share of all students in OECD countries), Korea (69,840, and 5%), Japan (63,340, and 4%), Greece (57,825 and 4%), Germany (52,825 and

4%), France (48,764 and 3%), India (48, 515, and 3%), Turkey (44,009 and 3%), Malaysia (40,873 and 3%), Italy (39,487 and 3%), Morocco (36,504 and 3%). There were 32,122 students from the USA studying abroad making a 2% of the total number of foreign students in the OECD area, and 23,136 students from the UK making also 2% of total. Most foreign students in the OECD area come from Asia (45% of all foreign students) and 34% from Europe.

Table 3.1 below presents data on foreign students in the OECD area by region of origin for 1995 and 1999, and enables a regional comparison of foreign student flows.

**Table 3.1 Share of foreign students studying abroad in OECD countries by region of origin**

	1995				1999			
	OECD countries in				OECD countries in			
Region of origin	Europe	EU	America	Asia-Oceania	Europe	EU	America	Asia-Oceania
Europe	77%	69%	21%	2%	82%	74%	15%	2%
EU	78%	70%	21%	1%	84%	77%	15%	2%
America	34%	32%	62%	4%	40%	38%	55%	5%
Asia-Oceania	25%	23%	53%	22%	29%	27%	46%	25%
OECD	50%	46%	39%	11%	54%	49%	34%	13%

Source: OECD (2002b)

It appears that, in 1995, 77% of students from Europe studying abroad (including EU and non-EU countries) were studying in another European country, and 70% of EU students were studying in another EU. These percentages in 1999 were increased to 82% and 77% respectively. These percentages suggest not only a high degree of 'regionalisation' of student mobility flows in the European region (higher than in the American and Asia/Oceania regions) but also an increasing 'regionalisation' of student mobility flows within the European region (by 5%) and the EU (by 7%) in the period 1995-1999. Regionalisation of student mobility flows in Asia-Oceania, although rather low is also on the increase (from 22% in 1995 to 25% in 1999).

When intra-region patterns of student flows and changes in the period 1995-1999 are examined, it appears that the proportion of students from Asia-Oceania studying in American OECD member countries is decreasing (from 53% in 1995 to 46% in 1999) while in Europe and the EU is on the increase (from 25% and 23% respectively in 1995 to 29% and 27% in

1999). The proportion of students from Europe and the EU countries studying in America also decreased (from 21% in 1995 to 15% in 1999) while the percentage of students from America studying in Europe and the EU is increasing (from 34% and 32%, respectively in 1995, to 40% and 38% in 1999). It can, therefore, be argued that European higher education systems are increasingly attractive to students at a global level.

The OECD study also examined the fields of study foreign students choose in selected major receiving OECD countries. It found that in Anglo-Saxon countries, international students are far more attracted than domestic students by business, administrative, and engineering studies. In the US, 20% of all foreign students study business and management, and 15% are on engineering courses. Other important findings were that international students are always less than average, on education courses, and slightly less than average on science courses. They also study, more than average, humanities and arts, and generally less than average health courses (with the exception of Poland, Hungary, and Italy). When the level of study was examined, it was found that, compared to domestic students, a higher proportion of international students study at postgraduate level. In the UK, for example, 9% of British students study at postgraduate level, against 26% for EU students, and 41% of overseas students. In the USA, about 17% of all students were studying at postgraduate level against 45% of international students. It thus appears that large numbers of international students study abroad at a postgraduate level, and institutions of receiving countries depend heavily on such international mobility of students.

## **2 Patterns and trends in European student mobility from early 1980s to mid-1990s**

This section examines main patterns, changes and trends in student mobility flows within the European Union countries from early 1980s to mid-1990s. The analysis is based on data obtained from UNESCO annual statistical yearbooks.

Table 3.2 below includes data on student mobility between European Union countries in the early 1980s. We refer to 'early 1980s' instead of a specific year as no data were available on an annual basis for all countries examined. Therefore, the rationale adopted here was to include, for each country, data of the year after and closer to 1980. Specifically, data included refer to proportions of foreign students in host country (in rows) by country of origin (in

columns) of years 1980 (Belgium, Denmark, France, (then) Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and UK), 1981 (Austria, Netherlands), 1982 (then Democratic Republic of Germany), 1983 (Finland), 1984 (Sweden). Countries that were not EU members in the early 1980s have also been included for the sake of continuity and comparison. These are Spain and Portugal that joined the EU in 1985, and Austria, Finland, Sweden that became EU members in 1995. For the same purpose, data of both states of Germany were also included and presented separately. Data for Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, and Canada refer to universities and equivalent institutions only. Data for the UK refer to full-time students enrolled in universities, technical colleges (advanced courses), and colleges of education. Data for Netherlands and Ireland refer to full-time students only. Data for Italy do not include foreign students on research courses.

**Table 3.2 Proportions of EU mobile students studying in an another EU country, in early 1980s**

Host country	Country of origin																	
	Year 19.	GR	GE-F	IT	UK	FR	FI	SP	NE	AU	LU	PO	BE	IR	SW	DE	GE-D	% of EU total
GE-F	80	21.0	-	22.2	29.8	59.0	18.4	26.1	46.2	89.9	26.4	11.0	27.7	8.8	41.0	34.4	0	25.1
FR	80	16.4	34.3	22.3	43.1	-	0	54.6	11.0	0	35.1	61.2	37.8	56.9	0	0	0	23.1
IT	80	48.3	10.1	-	4.2	7.9	0.5	1.5	0.9	1.9	0.4	0.9	7.2	0.8	3.3	2.3	71.6	18.8
AU	81	2.5	30.5	36.1	2.4	2.8	2.3	1.3	1.1	-	13.1	0.7	0.9	1.0	6.0	2.3	1.7	9.2
SW	84	1.7	3.3	1.2	5.0	2.2	75.1	2.0	2.7	0.2	0.0	2.2	0.5	1.0	-	48.6	3.0	6.8
BE	80	1.4	5.2	11.1	3.0	12.0	0.1	5.7	29.9	0.4	23.9	6.0	-	1.6	1.9	1.3	0.4	5.7
UK	80	7.7	2.3	1.8	-	5.7	1.0	3.8	4.1	1.0	0.2	8.9	3.1	27.5	7.5	4.7	4.8	4.8
NE	81	0.2	7.6	1.9	4.3	2.4	0.5	2.2	-	2.0	0.3	1.5	18.4	0.8	3.1	2.9	2.1	2.5
DE	80	0.0	2.9	0.2	3.5	2.1	1.4	0.5	1.8	0.5	0	0.3	0.6	1.0	26.5	-	0.4	1.4
SP	80	0.3	1.9	2.1	2.4	4.3	0	-	0.9	0.6	0	6.6	2.8	0	0.3	0.9	0	1.3
FI	83	0.0	0.5	0.1	0.5	0.4	-	0.0	0.2	0.2	0	0.1	0.1	0.0	9.3	1.5	0	0.3
IR	80	0.0	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.5	-	0.6	0.5	0	0.2
GR	80	-	0	0.2	0.9	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	15.2	0.1
PO	80	0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	1.4	0.1	0.0	0	-	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.4	0.1
LU		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
GE-R	82	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
total		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
% of total EU		33.1	13.6	8.3	6.4	5.7	5.7	5.0	4.4	3.9	3.3	3.3	2.5	1.5	1.32	0.9	0.2	

Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbooks

The total number of EU students studying in another EU country, in the early 1980s, was 77,602<sup>2</sup>. Flows were, however, asymmetric. The most popular destination countries among students from EU countries, studying in an EU country other than their own, were Germany with 25.1% (19,534 students), and France with 23.1% (17,930) of the total EU student population studying in an EU country other than their own. Data for Germany also include those EU nationals settled in Germany (particularly immigrants from South European countries) and, therefore, the total number of EU students studying in Germany may be overestimated. It is not, therefore, unlikely that the most popular country among EU students, studying in an EU country other than their own, in early 1980s, was France. These major receiving countries were followed by Italy with 18.8% of the total intra-European Union mobility, and Austria with 9.2% of students. The UK was, in the early 1980s a rather minor destination country among EU students studying in another EU country with 4.8% of students. Other minor destination countries were Sweden (6.8%), Belgium (5.7%), Netherlands (2.5%), Denmark (1.4%), Spain (1.3%), Finland (0.3%), Ireland (0.2%), Portugal (0.1%), and Greece (0.1%).

The major exporting EU country to other EU countries was Greece with 33.1%. Indeed, one out of three EU students studying in another EU country was of Greek origin. This was followed by German (Federal Republic) students with 13.6%, Italian students with 8.3%, and UK students with 6.4%. Large were also numbers of students from France (5.7%), Finland (5.7%), and Spain (5%). Minor exporting countries were Netherlands (4.4%), Austria (3.9%), Luxembourg (3.3%), Portugal (3.3%), Belgium (2.5%), Ireland (1.5%), Sweden (1.32%), and Denmark (0.9%).

When popular destination countries by EU country of student origin was examined the following were observed. The most popular EU country among Austrian students studying in other EU countries was Germany (Federal Republic) with 89.9% (almost nine out of ten). Only 1% of Austrian students was studying in the UK. The most popular EU destination countries for Belgian students were France (37.8%), Germany (27.7%) and Netherlands (18.4%). A minority of 3.1% was studying in the UK. The most popular EU countries among Danish students were Sweden (48.6%) and Germany (34.4%). Similarly, three-fourths of

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<sup>2</sup> For absolute numbers see Appendix 1

Finnish students studying in another EU country were studying in Sweden (75.1%) and less than one-fifth were studying in Germany (only 1% in the UK). The majority (59%) of French students studying in another EU country was studying in Germany. Belgium was the second EU country mostly receiving French students with 12%, followed by Italy with 7.9%, and the UK with 5.7%. The most popular countries among German students (federal Germany) were France (34.3%) and Austria (30.5%). Significant proportions of German students were studying in Italy (10.1%), and Netherlands (7.6%). Almost half (48.3%) of Greek students studying in another EU country were studying in Italy. About one-fifth (21%) of Greek students was studying in Germany, 16.4% in France and 7.7% in the UK.

The majority of Irish students were studying in France (56.9%), more than one-fourth (27.5%) in the UK, and less than one-tenth (8.8%) in Germany. The most popular EU destination country among Italian students studying in another EU country was Austria (36.1%) followed by France (22.3%), and Germany (22.2%). France (with 35.1%) and Germany (with 26.4%) were the two most popular countries among students from Luxembourg. They were followed by Belgium (with 23.9%), and Austria (13.1%). The majority of Portuguese students studying in another EU country was studying in France (61.2%). This was followed by Germany (11%), UK (8.9%), Spain (6.6%) and Belgium (6%). France was also the most popular destination country among Spanish students studying in other EU countries with 54.6%. Over one-fourth of Spanish students (26.1%) was studying in Germany, and 5.7% was studying in Belgium, while only a small minority (3.8%) was studying in the UK. Swedish students studying in other EU countries were studying most frequently in Germany (41%), Denmark (26.5%), Finland (9.3%) and the UK (7.5%). Finally, UK students studying in another EU country were studying most frequently in France (43.1%) and Germany (29.8%).

In sum, Germany was the most popular choice of destination country among students (studying in another EU country) from four other countries: Austria (89.9%), France (59%), the Netherlands (46.2%), and Sweden (41%). France was the most popular choice among students from six countries: Portugal (61.2%), Ireland (56.9%), Spain (54.6%), UK (43.1%), Germany (34.3%), and Luxembourg (35.1%). Italy, the third most popular destination country among all EU students studying in another EU country was the most popular choice among students from Greece (48.3%) and East Germany (71.6%).

In early 1980s, flows were also asymmetric, with respect to incoming/outgoing ratios by EU country. This ratio shows the profile of student mobility in each country in terms of inward or outward flow patterns. The ratio was obtained by dividing the number of incoming by the number of outgoing students. Therefore, ratios closer to 1 represent a more balanced profile of student flows for each country, ratios below 1 represent a country profile of more outgoing students, and ratios above 1 represent more incoming students. As shown in Table 3.3 there were more incoming than outgoing students in Sweden, France, Austria, Germany (Federal Republic), Italy, Belgium, and Denmark. These countries were net 'importers' of students. Net 'exporter' countries were three South European countries (Greece, Portugal, Spain), Finland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, UK, and Ireland.

**Table 3.3 Incoming and outgoing student ratios, by country in early 1980s**

	incoming	outgoing	difference	incoming-outgoing ratio
SW	5301	1026	+4275	5,17
FR	17930	4493	+13437	3,99
AU	7176	3091	+4085	2,32
BE	4473	1954	+2519	2,29
IT	14660	6481	+8179	2,26
GE-F	19534	10611	+8923	1,84
DE	1102	718	+384	1,53
UK	3749	5015	-1266	0,75
NE	1977	3458	-1481	0,57
SP	1041	3912	-2871	0,27
IR	172	1211	-1039	0,14
FI	254	4474	-4220	0,06
PO	111	2590	-2479	0,04
GR	122	25718	-25596	0,00
GE-D	0	229	-229	0,00

Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbooks

Tables 3.4 below presents data on EU mobile students in mid-1990s. 'Mid-1990s' was selected instead of a specific year because of lack of data in UNESCO yearbooks for every year for each EU country. As the aim here was to compare student flows with those of early 1980s and identify trends, the rationale adopted in the compilation of data presented in this Table was to include data of the year 1995 and of years before that. Therefore, data included refer to years 1991 (Greece), 1992 (Netherlands) 1993 (France, UK), 1994 (Belgium, Portugal, Spain), and 1995 (Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy).

When compared with early 1980s these data suggest that the total number of EU students studying in another EU country has grown rapidly. Specifically, the actual number of EU students studying in another EU country in mid-1990s was almost tripled (from 77,602 to



**Table 3.4 Proportions of EU students studying in another EU country in mid-1990s**

Host country	Country of origin																
	Year 19.	GR	GE	FR	IT	IR	SP	UK	NE	AU	PO	BE	FI	SW	DE	LU	% of EU total
UK	93	46.0	38.9	40.7	17.7	90.9	40.5	-	26.9	10.8	14.1	36.1	22.4	36.6	40.3	11.3	<b>36.4</b>
GE	95	22.3	-	21.8	22.7	3.2	0.2	23.6	24.9	75.8	20.4	14.9	20.5	21.0	17.4	25.4	<b>19.7</b>
FR	93	7.8	18.6	-	11.6	3.1	18.1	31.2	8.17	3.7	48.3	22.6	4.7	14.9	11.5	22.1	<b>12.7</b>
BE	94	2.5	2.0	18.5	16.2	0.3	8.6	2.3	28.6	0.3	6.9	-	0.6	1.3	1.3	33.4	<b>8.0</b>
AU	95	0.9	16.6	1.2	22.5	0.1	1.3	0.1	0.9	-	0.5	1.2	2.9	4.7	1.6	5.9	<b>6.0</b>
SP	94	0.4	7.7	10.4	6.4	1.3	-	14.5	6.7	4.5	7.4	9.1	2.0	4.2	5.0	0.3	<b>5.4</b>
IT	95	18.8	4.0	2.1	-	0.1	1.0	1.1	0.5	1.0	0	2.7	1.2	1.9	1.2	0.4	<b>4.3</b>
SW	95	0.4	1.9	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.5	3.1	1.1	1.3	0.3	0.2	41.4	-	17.4	0	<b>2.1</b>
NE	92	0.3	5.5	0.8	1.2	0.1	1.9	4.5	-	0.9	1.2	11.1	1.3	1.9	2.0	0.3	<b>2.0</b>
IR	95	0.1	1.3	1.0	0.3	-	0.9	13.4	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.6	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.0	<b>1.3</b>
DE	95	0.0	1.7	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.3	2.6	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.2	1.3	6.4	-	0.0	<b>0.7</b>
PO	94	0.0	0.6	1.9	0.2	0.0	1.1	0.4	0.2	0.0	-	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	<b>0.5</b>
FI	95	0.0	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.7	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	-	5.4	0.9	0	<b>0.3</b>
GR	91	-	0.2	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0	0	<b>0.0</b>
LU		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
total		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	<b>100</b>
% of EU total		<b>16.3</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>2.1</b>	

Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbooks

## Chapter Three

### Flows, patterns, and trends in student mobility in the EU

#### Introduction

This chapter aims to give an overview of i) student mobility flows in the European Union, and ii) flows of mobile students from EU countries towards the UK. It also aims to explore whether there exist underlying factors across EU countries explaining mobile student flow patterns. Specifically, the first section examines European student mobility in the global context and shows the high and growing regionalisation of intra-European student mobility. The second section, adopting an over time perspective, compares student flows within EU countries between early 1980s and mid-1990s, and identifies main patterns and trends in intra-European student mobility flows<sup>1</sup>. It shows that intra-European student mobility is on the increase and a major change of flows direction has occurred towards the UK. The third section examines data on mobile student flows and patterns within the SOCRATES-ERASMUS (and other EU mobility programmes). It confirms asymmetries of student flows across EU countries and the high popularity of the UK among ERASMUS mobile students.

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<sup>1</sup> Note of caution. The data on foreign student flows presented in this section are based on data held and published by international organisations (UNESCO, OECD, EUROSTAT). UNESCO has long been collecting and publishing such data while the OECD and EUROSTAT have shown such interest since early 1990s reflecting the growing policy interest in international mobility of students. Despite improvement over time, such data are not without problems concerning particularly methods and definitions used. International organisations rely on national definitions, coverage, collection methods, and reporting of countries hosting mobile students. As a result definitions and classifications used do not necessarily match across countries and, therefore, comparisons at an international level must be treated with caution. In particular, national definitions of foreign students vary as certain countries use nationality to define students as 'foreign' (e.g. Germany), country of permanent residence (e.g. UK) or qualification held by students (e.g. Portugal). In addition, in some cases only students on full-time courses are included. Differences in structure of educational systems across countries, and reforms introduced may also make international comparisons difficult (and especially over time comparisons), as data may not necessarily include all similar types of institutions. This is particularly the case for the non-university sector of tertiary education. Furthermore, these data do not distinguish between students studying in another country for a degree to be obtained abroad and students studying abroad only for a period (e.g. student exchanges). In addition, such published data do not always allow student flows by level of study abroad (i.e. undergraduate or postgraduate), to be examined. Finally, not all countries collect data on foreign students on an annual basis. Despite such limitations some broad trends and patterns in student mobility can be identified. For an analysis of limitations and problems of international data on student mobility in the EU see also Dimitropoulos and West, 1999.

The fourth section analyses main characteristics and trends in mobility of EU students towards the UK, the most popular destination country among EU mobile students. Specifically, it examines data on EU students studying in public-funded UK universities, (held by the UK Higher Education Statistical Service, and the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service), and explores EU domiciled student enrolments and applications (undergraduate level only) to study in the UK. It shows that EU student demand for study in UK universities is growing rapidly with large differences across subjects. The conclusions of this chapter, summarising main findings, also shows that no patterns across countries have been identified explaining student flows with probable exception some similarities in flows of Scandinavian students.

## **1 European student mobility in the global context**

A recent analysis carried out by the OECD (OECD, 2002b) provides, not only a broader perspective of student mobility in the OECD countries, but also the broader context of intra-European student mobility, and its place in a global perspective. According to the OECD study there were 1.5 million foreign students in OECD countries (in 1999), of whom 56% were from non-OECD countries. The USA is the most popular destination country, receiving almost one-third (450,000) of all students, followed by the UK (with over 200,000 international students). Other popular destination countries were Germany (with about 175,000 students), France (about 130,000 students), Australia (about 120,000), and Japan (about 50,000). Altogether, the USA, the UK, Germany, France, Australia, and Japan attract more than 75% of all foreign students in the OECD countries. Anglophone OECD countries (USA, UK, Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand) attract over half of foreign students in the OECD area.

This OECD study also examined the development of student mobility since 1980, using UNESCO data for 1980 and 1990 and OECD data for 1999. It found that the number of post-secondary foreign students in OECD countries has doubled over the past twenty years. The increase was dramatic in Australia with a relative decline in France, Canada, and the USA. The highest absolute number of foreign students, studying in the OECD area in 1999, come from China (98,813 students, and 7% share of all students in OECD countries), Korea (69,840, and 5%), Japan (63,340, and 4%), Greece (57,825 and 4%), Germany (52,825 and

4%), France (48,764 and 3%), India (48, 515, and 3%), Turkey (44,009 and 3%), Malaysia (40,873 and 3%), Italy (39,487 and 3%), Morocco (36,504 and 3%). There were 32,122 students from the USA studying abroad making a 2% of the total number of foreign students in the OECD area, and 23,136 students from the UK making also 2% of total. Most foreign students in the OECD area come from Asia (45% of all foreign students) and 34% from Europe.

Table 3.1 below presents data on foreign students in the OECD area by region of origin for 1995 and 1999, and enables a regional comparison of foreign student flows.

**Table 3.1 Share of foreign students studying abroad in OECD countries by region of origin**

	1995				1999			
	OECD countries in				OECD countries in			
Region of origin	Europe	EU	America	Asia-Oceania	Europe	EU	America	Asia-Oceania
Europe	77%	69%	21%	2%	82%	74%	15%	2%
EU	78%	70%	21%	1%	84%	77%	15%	2%
America	34%	32%	62%	4%	40%	38%	55%	5%
Asia-Oceania	25%	23%	53%	22%	29%	27%	46%	25%
OECD	50%	46%	39%	11%	54%	49%	34%	13%

**Source: OECD (2002b)**

It appears that, in 1995, 77% of students from Europe studying abroad (including EU and non-EU countries) were studying in another European country, and 70% of EU students were studying in another EU. These percentages in 1999 were increased to 82% and 77% respectively. These percentages suggest not only a high degree of 'regionalisation' of student mobility flows in the European region (higher than in the American and Asia/Oceania regions) but also an increasing 'regionalisation' of student mobility flows within the European region (by 5%) and the EU (by 7%) in the period 1995-1999. Regionalisation of student mobility flows in Asia-Oceania, although rather low is also on the increase (from 22% in 1995 to 25% in 1999).

When intra-region patterns of student flows and changes in the period 1995-1999 are examined, it appears that the proportion of students from Asia-Oceania studying in American OECD member countries is decreasing (from 53% in 1995 to 46% in 1999) while in Europe and the EU is on the increase (from 25% and 23% respectively in 1995 to 29% and 27% in

1999). The proportion of students from Europe and the EU countries studying in America also decreased (from 21% in 1995 to 15% in 1999) while the percentage of students from America studying in Europe and the EU is increasing (from 34% and 32%, respectively in 1995, to 40% and 38% in 1999). It can, therefore, be argued that European higher education systems are increasingly attractive to students at a global level.

The OECD study also examined the fields of study foreign students choose in selected major receiving OECD countries. It found that in Anglo-Saxon countries, international students are far more attracted than domestic students by business, administrative, and engineering studies. In the US, 20% of all foreign students study business and management, and 15% are on engineering courses. Other important findings were that international students are always less than average, on education courses, and slightly less than average on science courses. They also study, more than average, humanities and arts, and generally less than average health courses (with the exception of Poland, Hungary, and Italy). When the level of study was examined, it was found that, compared to domestic students, a higher proportion of international students study at postgraduate level. In the UK, for example, 9% of British students study at postgraduate level, against 26% for EU students, and 41% of overseas students. In the USA, about 17% of all students were studying at postgraduate level against 45% of international students. It thus appears that large numbers of international students study abroad at a postgraduate level, and institutions of receiving countries depend heavily on such international mobility of students.

## **2 Patterns and trends in European student mobility from early 1980s to mid-1990s**

This section examines main patterns, changes and trends in student mobility flows within the European Union countries from early 1980s to mid-1990s. The analysis is based on data obtained from UNESCO annual statistical yearbooks.

Table 3.2 below includes data on student mobility between European Union countries in the early 1980s. We refer to 'early 1980s' instead of a specific year as no data were available on an annual basis for all countries examined. Therefore, the rationale adopted here was to include, for each country, data of the year after and closer to 1980. Specifically, data included refer to proportions of foreign students in host country (in rows) by country of origin (in

columns) of years 1980 (Belgium, Denmark, France, (then) Federal Republic of Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and UK), 1981 (Austria, Netherlands), 1982 (then Democratic Republic of Germany), 1983 (Finland), 1984 (Sweden). Countries that were not EU members in the early 1980s have also been included for the sake of continuity and comparison. These are Spain and Portugal that joined the EU in 1985, and Austria, Finland, Sweden that became EU members in 1995. For the same purpose, data of both states of Germany were also included and presented separately. Data for Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, and Canada refer to universities and equivalent institutions only. Data for the UK refer to full-time students enrolled in universities, technical colleges (advanced courses), and colleges of education. Data for Netherlands and Ireland refer to full-time students only. Data for Italy do not include foreign students on research courses.

**Table 3.2 Proportions of EU mobile students studying in an another EU country, in early 1980s**

Host country	Country of origin																	
	Year 19.	GR	GE-F	IT	UK	FR	FI	SP	NE	AU	LU	PO	BE	IR	SW	DE	GE-D	% of EU total
GE-F	80	21.0	-	22.2	29.8	59.0	18.4	26.1	46.2	89.9	26.4	11.0	27.7	8.8	41.0	34.4	0	25.1
FR	80	16.4	34.3	22.3	43.1	-	0	54.6	11.0	0	35.1	61.2	37.8	56.9	0	0	0	23.1
IT	80	48.3	10.1	-	4.2	7.9	0.5	1.5	0.9	1.9	0.4	0.9	7.2	0.8	3.3	2.3	71.6	18.8
AU	81	2.5	30.5	36.1	2.4	2.8	2.3	1.3	1.1	-	13.1	0.7	0.9	1.0	6.0	2.3	1.7	9.2
SW	84	1.7	3.3	1.2	5.0	2.2	75.1	2.0	2.7	0.2	0.0	2.2	0.5	1.0	-	48.6	3.0	6.8
BE	80	1.4	5.2	11.1	3.0	12.0	0.1	5.7	29.9	0.4	23.9	6.0	-	1.6	1.9	1.3	0.4	5.7
UK	80	7.7	2.3	1.8	-	5.7	1.0	3.8	4.1	1.0	0.2	8.9	3.1	27.5	7.5	4.7	4.8	4.8
NE	81	0.2	7.6	1.9	4.3	2.4	0.5	2.2	-	2.0	0.3	1.5	18.4	0.8	3.1	2.9	2.1	2.5
DE	80	0.0	2.9	0.2	3.5	2.1	1.4	0.5	1.8	0.5	0	0.3	0.6	1.0	26.5	-	0.4	1.4
SP	80	0.3	1.9	2.1	2.4	4.3	0	-	0.9	0.6	0	6.6	2.8	0	0.3	0.9	0	1.3
FI	83	0.0	0.5	0.1	0.5	0.4	-	0.0	0.2	0.2	0	0.1	0.1	0.0	9.3	1.5	0	0.3
IR	80	0.0	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.5	-	0.6	0.5	0	0.2
GR	80	-	0	0.2	0.9	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	15.2	0.1
PO	80	0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	1.4	0.1	0.0	0	-	0.1	0	0.0	0	0.4	0.1
LU		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
GE-R	82	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
total		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
% of total EU		33.1	13.6	8.3	6.4	5.7	5.7	5.0	4.4	3.9	3.3	3.3	2.5	1.5	1.32	0.9	0.2	

Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbooks

The total number of EU students studying in another EU country, in the early 1980s, was 77,602<sup>2</sup>. Flows were, however, asymmetric. The most popular destination countries among students from EU countries, studying in an EU country other than their own, were Germany with 25.1% (19,534 students), and France with 23.1% (17,930) of the total EU student population studying in an EU country other than their own. Data for Germany also include those EU nationals settled in Germany (particularly immigrants from South European countries) and, therefore, the total number of EU students studying in Germany may be overestimated. It is not, therefore, unlikely that the most popular country among EU students, studying in an EU country other than their own, in early 1980s, was France. These major receiving countries were followed by Italy with 18.8% of the total intra-European Union mobility, and Austria with 9.2% of students. The UK was, in the early 1980s a rather minor destination country among EU students studying in another EU country with 4.8% of students. Other minor destination countries were Sweden (6.8%), Belgium (5.7%), Netherlands (2.5%), Denmark (1.4%), Spain (1.3%), Finland (0.3%), Ireland (0.2%), Portugal (0.1%), and Greece (0.1%).

The major exporting EU country to other EU countries was Greece with 33.1%. Indeed, one out of three EU students studying in another EU country was of Greek origin. This was followed by German (Federal Republic) students with 13.6%, Italian students with 8.3%, and UK students with 6.4%. Large were also numbers of students from France (5.7%), Finland (5.7%), and Spain (5%). Minor exporting countries were Netherlands (4.4%), Austria (3.9%), Luxembourg (3.3%), Portugal (3.3%), Belgium (2.5%), Ireland (1.5%), Sweden (1.32%), and Denmark (0.9%).

When popular destination countries by EU country of student origin was examined the following were observed. The most popular EU country among Austrian students studying in other EU countries was Germany (Federal Republic) with 89.9% (almost nine out of ten). Only 1% of Austrian students was studying in the UK. The most popular EU destination countries for Belgian students were France (37.8%), Germany (27.7%) and Netherlands (18.4%). A minority of 3.1% was studying in the UK. The most popular EU countries among Danish students were Sweden (48.6%) and Germany (34.4%). Similarly, three-fourths of

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<sup>2</sup> For absolute numbers see Appendix 1

Finnish students studying in another EU country were studying in Sweden (75.1%) and less than one-fifth were studying in Germany (only 1% in the UK). The majority (59%) of French students studying in another EU country was studying in Germany. Belgium was the second EU country mostly receiving French students with 12%, followed by Italy with 7.9%, and the UK with 5.7%. The most popular countries among German students (federal Germany) were France (34.3%) and Austria (30.5%). Significant proportions of German students were studying in Italy (10.1%), and Netherlands (7.6%). Almost half (48.3%) of Greek students studying in another EU country were studying in Italy. About one-fifth (21%) of Greek students was studying in Germany, 16.4% in France and 7.7% in the UK.

The majority of Irish students were studying in France (56.9%), more than one-fourth (27.5%) in the UK, and less than one-tenth (8.8%) in Germany. The most popular EU destination country among Italian students studying in another EU country was Austria (36.1%) followed by France (22.3%), and Germany (22.2%). France (with 35.1%) and Germany (with 26.4%) were the two most popular countries among students from Luxembourg. They were followed by Belgium (with 23.9%), and Austria (13.1%). The majority of Portuguese students studying in another EU country was studying in France (61.2%). This was followed by Germany (11%), UK (8.9%), Spain (6.6%) and Belgium (6%). France was also the most popular destination country among Spanish students studying in other EU countries with 54.6%. Over one-fourth of Spanish students (26.1%) was studying in Germany, and 5.7% was studying in Belgium, while only a small minority (3.8%) was studying in the UK. Swedish students studying in other EU countries were studying most frequently in Germany (41%), Denmark (26.5%), Finland (9.3%) and the UK (7.5%). Finally, UK students studying in another EU country were studying most frequently in France (43.1%) and Germany (29.8%).

In sum, Germany was the most popular choice of destination country among students (studying in another EU country) from four other countries: Austria (89.9%), France (59%), the Netherlands (46.2%), and Sweden (41%). France was the most popular choice among students from six countries: Portugal (61.2%), Ireland (56.9%), Spain (54.6%), UK (43.1%), Germany (34.3%), and Luxembourg (35.1%). Italy, the third most popular destination country among all EU students studying in another EU country was the most popular choice among students from Greece (48.3%) and East Germany (71.6%).



In early 1980s, flows were also asymmetric, with respect to incoming/outgoing ratios by EU country. This ratio shows the profile of student mobility in each country in terms of inward or outward flow patterns. The ratio was obtained by dividing the number of incoming by the number of outgoing students. Therefore, ratios closer to 1 represent a more balanced profile of student flows for each country, ratios below 1 represent a country profile of more outgoing students, and ratios above 1 represent more incoming students. As shown in Table 3.3 there were more incoming than outgoing students in Sweden, France, Austria, Germany (Federal Republic), Italy, Belgium, and Denmark. These countries were net 'importers' of students. Net 'exporter' countries were three South European countries (Greece, Portugal, Spain), Finland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, UK, and Ireland.

**Table 3.3 Incoming and outgoing student ratios, by country in early 1980s**

	incoming	outgoing	difference	incoming-outgoing ratio
SW	5301	1026	+4275	5,17
FR	17930	4493	+13437	3,99
AU	7176	3091	+4085	2,32
BE	4473	1954	+2519	2,29
IT	14660	6481	+8179	2,26
GE-F	19534	10611	+8923	1,84
DE	1102	718	+384	1,53
UK	3749	5015	-1266	0,75
NE	1977	3458	-1481	0,57
SP	1041	3912	-2871	0,27
IR	172	1211	-1039	0,14
FI	254	4474	-4220	0,06
PO	111	2590	-2479	0,04
GR	122	25718	-25596	0,00
GE-D	0	229	-229	0,00

Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbooks

Tables 3.4 below presents data on EU mobile students in mid-1990s. 'Mid-1990s' was selected instead of a specific year because of lack of data in UNESCO yearbooks for every year for each EU country. As the aim here was to compare student flows with those of early 1980s and identify trends, the rationale adopted in the compilation of data presented in this Table was to include data of the year 1995 and of years before that. Therefore, data included refer to years 1991 (Greece), 1992 (Netherlands) 1993 (France, UK), 1994 (Belgium, Portugal, Spain), and 1995 (Austria, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy).

When compared with early 1980s these data suggest that the total number of EU students studying in another EU country has grown rapidly. Specifically, the actual number of EU students studying in another EU country in mid-1990s was almost tripled (from 77,602 to

**Table 3.4 Proportions of EU students studying in another EU country in mid-1990s**

Host country	Country of origin																
	Year 19.	GR	GE	FR	IT	IR	SP	UK	NE	AU	PO	BE	FI	SW	DE	LU	% of EU total
UK	93	46.0	38.9	40.7	17.7	90.9	40.5	-	26.9	10.8	14.1	36.1	22.4	36.6	40.3	11.3	36.4
GE	95	22.3	-	21.8	22.7	3.2	0.2	23.6	24.9	75.8	20.4	14.9	20.5	21.0	17.4	25.4	19.7
FR	93	7.8	18.6	-	11.6	3.1	18.1	31.2	8.17	3.7	48.3	22.6	4.7	14.9	11.5	22.1	12.7
BE	94	2.5	2.0	18.5	16.2	0.3	8.6	2.3	28.6	0.3	6.9	-	0.6	1.3	1.3	33.4	8.0
AU	95	0.9	16.6	1.2	22.5	0.1	1.3	0.1	0.9	-	0.5	1.2	2.9	4.7	1.6	5.9	6.0
SP	94	0.4	7.7	10.4	6.4	1.3	-	14.5	6.7	4.5	7.4	9.1	2.0	4.2	5.0	0.3	5.4
IT	95	18.8	4.0	2.1	-	0.1	1.0	1.1	0.5	1.0	0	2.7	1.2	1.9	1.2	0.4	4.3
SW	95	0.4	1.9	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.5	3.1	1.1	1.3	0.3	0.2	41.4	-	17.4	0	2.1
NE	92	0.3	5.5	0.8	1.2	0.1	1.9	4.5	-	0.9	1.2	11.1	1.3	1.9	2.0	0.3	2.0
IR	95	0.1	1.3	1.0	0.3	-	0.9	13.4	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.6	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.0	1.3
DE	95	0.0	1.7	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.3	2.6	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.2	1.3	6.4	-	0.0	0.7
PO	94	0.0	0.6	1.9	0.2	0.0	1.1	0.4	0.2	0.0	-	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.5
FI	95	0.0	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.7	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	-	5.4	0.9	0	0.3
GR	91	-	0.2	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0	0	0.0
LU		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
total		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
% of EU total		16.3	14.0	12.2	12.0	8.3	7.8	5.9	4.5	3.8	3.2	3.0	2.3	2.2	1.7	2.1	

Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbooks

226,594, a total increase of 192%)<sup>1</sup>. As also presented in Table 3.5 (see below) the highest rate of total increase was Irish students with 1458% (from 1,211 to 18,871). This was followed by French students (with 517%), Denmark (440%), Swedish (396%), Spanish (357%), Italian (321%), Belgian (255%). The lowest rates of increase were of Greek (44.2%) and Finnish students (19%). The low rate of increase of Greek students may be attributed to already high number of Greek students studying abroad in the early 1980s.

**Table 3.5 Outgoing students in early 1980s and mid-1990s, by country of origin**

country	IR	FR	DE	SW	SP	IT	BE	GE-F	NE	AU	PO	UK	LU	GR	FI	GE-R	Total
<b>1980s</b>	1211	4493	718	1026	3912	6481	1954	10611	3458	3091	2590	5015	2621	25718	4474	229	77602
<b>1990s</b>	18871	27731	3876	5093	17889	27282	6935	31880	10301	8819	7291	13409	4803	37107	5307	-	226594
<b>% of increase</b>	<b>1458</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>192</b>

Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbooks

Furthermore, in the period from early 1980s to mid-1990s, although flows of students have remained highly asymmetric, a major change of flows direction is observed. In particular, in mid-1990s, the most popular destination country among EU students studying in other EU countries was, by far, the UK with 36.4% (82,500 students) of the total intra-European Union student mobility. That is, over one out of three EU students, studying in another EU country was, in mid-1990s, studying in the UK.

Other major receiving countries following the UK - at a remarkable distance - were Germany (with 44,670 students and 19.7% of the total student mobility in the European Union), France (28,892 and 12.7%), Belgium (18,314 and 8%), Austria (13,685 and 6%), Spain (12,321 and 5.4%), Italy (9,845 and 4.3%), Sweden (4,820 and 2.1%), Netherlands (4,675 and 2%), Ireland (3,120 and 1.3%), Denmark (1,704 and 0.7%), Portugal (1,114 and 0.5%), Finland (764 and 0.3%), and Greece (138 students). The major exporting country remained Greece with 16.3% of the total intra-European Union mobility, followed by Germany (14%), France (12.2%), Italy (12%), Ireland (8.3%), Spain (7.8%), UK (5.9%), Austria (3.8%), Portugal (3.2%), Belgium (3%), Finland (2.3%), Sweden (2.2%), Luxembourg (2.1%) and Denmark (1.7%).

<sup>1</sup> For absolute numbers see Appendix 1.

The UK was, in mid-1990s, the most popular destination country among students from eight EU countries. These were Belgium (36.1%), Denmark (40.3%), France (40.7%), Germany (38.9%), Greece (46%), Ireland (90.9%), Spain (40.5%), and Sweden (36.6%). Germany remained the most popular destination country among Austrian (although at a lower rate than in early 1980s with 75.8% against 89.9%), Italian (22.7% against 22.2%) and Luxembourg students (25.4% against 26.4%). France remained the most popular destination country only among Portuguese students, and at a lower rate, than early 1980s (with 48.3% against 61.2%).

In mid-1990s the most popular EU country among Austrian students studying in other EU countries were again Germany with 75.8% (from 89.9% in early 1980s). The proportion, however, of Austrian students studying in the UK was increased to 10.8% (from 1%). The UK was the most popular country among Belgian students with 36.1% (from 3.1%). The UK had overtaken France that, in mid-1990s, was the second most popular destination country among Belgian students with 22.6% (from 37.8%). Germany follows with 14.9% (from 27.8%).

A large change of direction of Danish students flows towards the UK was also observed as 40.3% was studying in the UK (from 4.7%). This was followed by 17.4% studying in Sweden (from 48.6%), and 17.4% studying in Germany (from 34.4%). Sweden was again the most popular destination country among Finnish students although the proportion was decreased from 75.1% to 41.4%. The proportion of Finnish students that was studying in the UK was rapidly increased from 1% to 22.4%. Over one out of five Finnish students (22.4%) was studying in Germany in mid-1990s.

Flows of French students also changed direction towards the UK with 40.7% (from 5.7%). The proportion of French students studying in Germany was decreased from 59% to 21.8%. Flows of German students changed direction from France (from 34.3% to 18.5%) and Austria (from 30.5% to 16.6%) towards the UK with a total of 38.9% (from 2.3%). The most popular destination country among Greek students was also, in mid-1990s, the UK with 46% (from 7.7%). Flows of Greek students also changed direction from Italy (18.8% from 48.3%) and France (7.8% from 16.4%) towards the UK. Germany remained the second most popular EU destination country among Greek students studying in the EU. Irish students were more

frequently studying in the UK (90.9% from 27.5%) and less often in France (3.1% from 56.9%) and Germany (3.2% from 8.8%).

The most popular EU countries among Italian students were in mid-1990s Germany (with 22.7% from 22.2%), and Austria (22.5% from 36.1%). The proportion of Italian students studying in the UK was increased from 1.8% to 17.7%. The UK was in mid-1990s the third major receiving country of Italian students studying in another EU country. The most popular destination countries among students from Luxembourg, in mid-1990s, were Belgium (with 33.4% from 23.9%), Germany (with 25.4% from 26.4%), France (with 22.1% from 22.3%) and the UK (with 11.3% from 1.8%). The most popular EU destination countries among Dutch students were Belgium (with 28.6% from 29.9%), UK (with 26.9% from 4.1%), Germany (with 24.9% from 46.2%), and France (with 8.1% from 11%). Portuguese students were studying again more frequently in France but that proportion was decreased from 61.2% to 48.3%. The proportions of Portuguese students studying in Germany and the UK were increased to 20.4% (from 11%) and 14.1% from 8.9%) respectively.

An important change was also observed among Spanish students and their choice of destination country. Spanish students were studying more frequently in the UK with 40.5% (from 3.8%), France with 18.1% (from 54.6%) and Belgium with 8.6% (from 5.7%). The proportion of Spanish students studying in Germany was decreased from 26.1% to 0.2%. The UK was also the most frequent destination country among Swedish students with 36.6% (from 7.5%). The proportion of Swedish students studying in Germany was decreased from 41% to 23.6%, and in Denmark from 26.5% to 6.4%, but increased of those studying in France from 9.3% to 14.9%. The most popular destination country among UK students studying in another EU country remained France (with 31.2% from 43.1%) and Germany (with 23.6% from 29.8%). The proportions increased were those of UK students studying in Spain (14.5% from 2.4%) and Ireland with 13.4% from 0.1%).

Table 3.6 below presents ratios of incoming/outgoing students by EU country in the mid-1990s. The ratios of early 1980s are also included for the sake of comparison. In the mid-1990s net 'importer' countries (having more incoming than outgoing students) were the UK, Germany, Belgium, Austria, and France. Net 'exporter' countries were all South European

countries (Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain), Scandinavian countries (Finland, Denmark, Sweden), Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Ireland.

**Table 3.6 Incoming and outgoing students in mid- 1990s**

country	incoming	Outgoing	difference	<i>incoming- outgoing ratio in mid-1990s</i>	incoming- outgoing ratio in early 1980s
UK	82500	13409	+69091	<b>6,15</b>	0,75
BE	18314	6935	+11379	<b>2,64</b>	2,29
AU	13685	8819	+4866	<b>1,55</b>	2,32
GE	44670	31880	+12790	<b>1,40</b>	1,84
FR	28892	27731	+1161	<b>1,04</b>	3,99
SW	4820	5093	-273	<b>0,95</b>	5,17
SP	12321	17889	-5568	<b>0,69</b>	0,27
NE	4675	10301	-5626	<b>0,45</b>	0,57
DE	1704	3876	-2172	<b>0,44</b>	1,53
IT	9845	27282	-17437	<b>0,36</b>	2,26
IR	3120	18871	-15751	<b>0,17</b>	0,14
PO	1146	7291	-6145	<b>0,16</b>	0,04
FI	764	5307	-4543	<b>0,14</b>	0,06
GR	138	37107	-36969	<b>0,00</b>	0,00
LU	0	4803	-4803	<b>0,00</b>	0,00
<b>Total</b>	<b>226594</b>	<b>226594</b>		<b>1,00</b>	1,00

Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbooks

When intra-European student mobility flows in mid-1990s were compared with those of early 1980s, some noteworthy changes in incoming/outgoing ratios can be discerned. The UK from net 'exporter' country in early 1980s (with incoming/outgoing student ratio of 0.75) was the largest net 'importer' country in the European Union in mid-1990s (with an outstanding ratio of 6.15%). France, although it remained a net 'importer' country, has reduced its incoming/outgoing student ratio from 3.99 to 1.04. This is due to increasing number of French students studying in other EU countries. Italy from a net 'importer' country (with 2.26 ratio) was, in mid 1990s, a net 'exporter' country (ratio 0.36). Sweden in early 1980s was an outstanding net 'importer' country (ratio 5.17). In mid-1990s it was a net 'exporter' country (although a small one with ratio 0.95). A similar pattern was observed in Denmark. From net importer country (ratio 1.5) Denmark was transformed to a net exporter (with ratio 0.44).

Table 3.7 below presents the total number of students in tertiary education of each EU country, and the absolute number of EU students studying in an EU country other than their own (1996/1997). It also presents for each EU country, students that study in other EU countries as a proportion of the total number of students enrolled in tertiary education of that

country. This percentage was obtained dividing the number of students of each country by the number of students of that country studying in other EU countries.

Despite rapid increase in absolute numbers of EU students, studying in an EU country other than their own, the number of these students as a proportion to all students in EU countries tertiary education institutions was, in 1995/96, rather low (about 1.9%). This finding supports the argument that in the EU, the choice to study abroad for a degree or for a shorter period of study is a rather marginal phenomenon.

Large differences across EU countries were observed when students studying in other EU countries were examined as a proportion of students studying in home countries tertiary education. Specifically, more than two out of three Luxembourgian students study out of Luxembourg. This is usually attributed to the fact that Luxembourg has limited tertiary education provision (see also CEC, 2000:110).

**Table 3.7 EU students studying in an EU country other than their own as a proportion of those studying at home**

<b>EU country</b>	<i>students in tertiary education</i>	<i>students in other EU countries</i>	<i>students in other EU countries as % of students studying at home</i>
<b>LU</b>	2000	4733	<b>236,65</b>
<b>IR</b>	135000	16211	<b>12,01</b>
<b>GR</b>	363000	42020	<b>11,58</b>
<b>AU</b>	241000	8836	<b>3,67</b>
<b>FI</b>	226000	6072	<b>2,69</b>
<b>PO</b>	351000	9347	<b>2,66</b>
<b>NE</b>	469000	10184	<b>2,17</b>
<b>DE</b>	180000	3860	<b>2,14</b>
<b>SW</b>	275000	5505	<b>2,00</b>
<b>BE</b>	361000	6554	<b>1,82</b>
<b>IT</b>	1893000	28355	<b>1,50</b>
<b>GE</b>	2132000	30600	<b>1,44</b>
<b>FR</b>	2063000	29297	<b>1,42</b>
<b>SP</b>	1684,000	17479	<b>1,04</b>
<b>UK</b>	1891000	13021	<b>0,69</b>
<b>Total</b>	12266000	232074	<b>1,89</b>

**Source: EUROSTAT**

Large proportions of Irish (12%) and Greek students (11.5%) study outside of their own country. These were followed by Austrian students (3.67%), Finnish (2.69%), Portuguese (2.66%), Dutch (2.17%), Danish (2.14%), Swedish (2%), Belgian (1.82%), Italian (1.5%), German (1.44%), French (1.42%), Spain (1.04%). The UK has the lowest proportion of students studying in another EU country with (0.6%).

Data analysed in this section (for limitations see above footnote 1) suggest that the absolute number of mobile students within European Union countries (although low when compared with the total number of students in higher education) has tripled in the period from early 1980s to mid-1990s. As, however, in the period under examination higher education has been expanding in all EU countries, and given data limitations, it is not possible to conclude with confidence whether students in EU countries studying in another EU country have increased as a proportion of students studying at their home country. Such an indication may be provided, however, as the number of students in higher education in the EU has increased at a lower rate. Specifically, according to European Commission estimates<sup>2</sup> the number of students in EU countries has increased from about 6.543.000 in 1980/81 to 11.933.000 in 1995/96, that is, participation in EU countries' higher education, in the same period was less than doubled.

The data examined in this section also suggest that a major change of direction of EU mobile student flows towards the UK has occurred since early 1980s. As a result the UK was, in mid-1990s, by far the most popular destination country among EU students studying in another EU country. It has also emerged that, although intra-European Union student mobility has increased it remained highly asymmetric with respect to inflow-outflow student ratios for each country. The UK, Germany, France, Belgium, and Austria were (in mid-1990s) net importer countries. Scandinavian, South European countries (notably Greece), Ireland, Luxembourg and Netherlands were net exporter countries of EU students studying in other EU countries.

#### *The Jallade et al study*

In a study funded by the European Commission education services, and conducted by the European Institute of Education and Social Policy (Jallade, J., P., et al, 1995) a more elaborate overview of intra-European Union mobility of students was provided. In particular, the study examined student flows within European Union member states as well as Austria, Finland and Sweden (that were due to become members in 1995). The Jallade et al study attempted to cover all higher education institutions, that is, the university as well as the non-university sectors of higher education. The study also distinguished between 'spontaneous

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<sup>2</sup> see CEC (2000) Key Data on Education in Europe, pp. 104 and 222.



mobility' (referring to those students registered under standard procedures), and 'organised mobility' (referring to mobility of students within the ERASMUS and LINGUA European Union programmes). For 'spontaneous' mobility, the study distinguished between new entrants and postgraduate students (specialist mobility). For most countries data referred to year 1993/94. The Jallade *et al* study has also made a useful distinction between 'mobile foreign students' and 'resident foreign students'. It must be noted that, although the Jallade *et al* study has made an advancing conceptual distinction between 'spontaneous' and 'organised' mobility that incurs methodological advantages, the application of such distinction in existing data collection methods used by national authorities is not unproblematic. For example, it may not be accurate to classify as 'spontaneous' mobility those students that are registered under normal procedures in a higher education institution of an EU country other than their own, and distinguish them from 'organised' mobility when that refers only to those students supported to study abroad within EU mobility programmes. For, students registered under normal procedures may be simply supported to study abroad by state scholarships or other national grants, or loans (that national governments have made transferable to other countries). Moreover, the category 'organised' mobility when it is used to distinguish from those not registered under normal procedures and refers only to EU supported students studying abroad for a period makes it difficult to classify those students that study abroad for a period on their own initiative (e.g. visiting students) or under an arrangement e.g. between institutions or other national authorities, or in those cases where the study period abroad is a compulsory element of the degree at home. It remains, however, to be explored whether the categories of students identified above constitute substantial numbers of students that would significantly limit the findings of the Jallade *et al* study<sup>3</sup>.

The main findings of the Jallade *et al* study are summarised as follows: The total number of mobile students from European Union countries (Austria, Sweden, Finland included) registered under standard procedures ('spontaneous' mobility) in the higher education system of EU countries was approximately 120,000 in 1993/94 (When 'organised' mobility is included the total number was about 184,000 mobile students). An annual increase of 'spontaneous' mobility by 10% was observed in the period between 1990/91 and 1993/94,

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<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, although the conceptual distinction made by the Jallade *et al* study has a practical value the concept 'spontaneous' is not unproblematic from a social and theoretical point of view as it seems to assign to the choice of students to study abroad a rather psychological tone.

ranging across countries. Of the total number of EU 'spontaneous' mobile students (1993/94) 51% were women. Although parity among sexes was found, the number of women mobile students varied considerably between host countries. Moreover, when the number of new entrants was examined, women accounted for 52%. Although differences in popularity of subjects studied in each country were observed, no strict country-by-subject specialisation was possible to be established. Asymmetries in student flows were found, with five EU countries having more incoming than outgoing students. These were the UK, France, Austria, Belgium and Sweden. The study also estimated that there were about 25,000 mobile postgraduate students (registered under standard procedures) in the EU member states (46% of which were women).

### 3 Student mobility flows within the EU mobility programmes

#### *The ERASMUS and LINGUA programmes*

This section analyses data of student mobility within the EU ERASMUS student exchange programme<sup>4</sup>. ERASMUS was launched in 1987/1988 and was open to the 12 EU member states. Since 1992/93 ERASMUS was also made open to Austria, Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Iceland. Since 1998/99 it was also made open to countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Cyprus), all potential EU members.

A note of caution must be made here. ERASMUS programme data refer to country where the home institution of students is based and not to the student's nationality or country of permanent residence. It must also be noted that according to the ERASMUS programme regulations higher education institutions apply to the EU Commission to establish institutional co-operation networks within which exchanges of students can take place with EU support. The EU Commission approves the number of students to be exchanged within such networks. Not all places to study abroad, however, are taken up by students studying in EU (and other European) institutions. 'Estimated' mobility refers to approved places and 'realised' mobility refers to the actual number of students taking on a period of study abroad within the ERASMUS programme. Take-up rates refer to the proportions of 'realised' to 'estimated' mobility.

In the period of 1987/88 to 99/2000 a total of 742,547 students studied (for a period of 3 to 9 months) in another European higher education institution, under an ERASMUS exchange agreement. The total number of students studied abroad within ERASMUS in 1987/88 was 3,244. This number has increased dramatically to 110,134 in 1999/2000 (of which 97,582 were students from EU member countries). The highest proportion of students taking up a period of study abroad within ERASMUS were students from a higher education institution in Germany (16,4%), France (16,2%), UK (13,8%), Spain (13,1%), and Italy (10,9%).

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<sup>4</sup> The data were obtained from the European Commission webpage at <http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/erasmus/stat.html>

Table 3.8 below presents absolute numbers and proportions of students studying abroad within ERASMUS (from 1987/88 to 1999/2000), by field of study. Field category 'LINGUA' refers to future language teachers that until 1996/97 were funded by the EU LINGUA programme. The most frequent subject studied by ERASMUS (and LINGUA) students was 'business studies' with 21.1%. This is followed by 'languages and philological sciences' with 15,9%; When LINGUA students are added (3.2%) the proportion of those studying languages amounts at 19.1%. The third most frequent subject category was 'engineering' with 9.4%. When 'architecture and planning' students are added (3,2%) the proportion of those studying technological sciences amounts at 12,6%. These are followed by those studying 'Social sciences' and 'Law' with 9.9% and 8% respectively.

**Table 3.8 Actual number of ERASMUS students, by field of study (1987-2000)**

Field of study	N	(%)
Business Studies	156371	21,1
Languages and philological sciences	117539	15,9
Social sciences	73327	9,9
Engineering	69955	9,5
Law	59849	8,0
Natural sciences	34436	4,7
Medical sciences	28820	3,9
Art & Design	27543	3,7
Humanities	27053	3,7
LINGUA	24284	3,3
Education	23869	3,2
Architecture & Planning	23988	3,2
Mathematics	18038	2,4
Agricultural sciences	13303	1,8
Geography	12416	1,7
Communication and information sciences	10116	1,4
Framework agreements	7764	1,0
Other subjects	6035	0,8
Unknown	5257	0,7
Total	739963	100

**Source: European Commission**

Table 3.9 below gives absolute numbers and percentages of 'estimated' and 'realised' mobility, and take-up rates within ERASMUS, by home country in 1997/98. Take-up rates by home country show how popular among students study periods abroad within ERASMUS are, in each EU and other participating countries.

The highest proportion of ERASMUS students were (in 1997/98) from French higher education institutions, with 17.7% of all ERASMUS students of that year. They were followed by students from German (16%), Spanish (14.5%), UK (12.3%) and Italian (14.5%) higher education institutions. The average 'take-up' rate of ERASMUS places to study abroad is 47.5% and varies substantially across different countries. Specifically, the countries where study periods abroad within ERASMUS are particularly popular are Austria (64.4%), Italy (56.3%), Belgium (55.6%), and Spain (53.8%). Countries where the ERASMUS study periods abroad are less popular among students are Greece (35.6%), UK (39.3%), Portugal (41%), and Netherlands (41.6%).

**Table 3.9 Home country of the 'estimated' and 'actual' numbers of ERASMUS students in 1997/98**  
(absolute numbers and percentages)

Home country	estimated		actual		'Take-up' rate
	N	(%)	N	(%)	(%)
AU	3783	2.1	2438	2.8	<i>64.4</i>
IT	16576	9.1	9334	10.8	<i>56.3</i>
BE	7615	4.2	4233	4.9	<i>55.6</i>
SP	23169	12.8	12468	14.5	<i>53.8</i>
IS	250	0.1	123	0.1	<i>49.2</i>
FR	31057	17.1	15263	17.7	<i>49.1</i>
SW	6579	3.6	3173	3.7	<i>48.2</i>
FI	6341	3.5	3052	3.5	<i>48.1</i>
DE	3977	2.2	1796	2.1	<i>45.2</i>
GE	30551	16.8	13785	16.0	<i>45.1</i>
NO	2473	1.4	1071	1.2	<i>43.3</i>
IR	3573	2.0	1509	1.7	<i>42.2</i>
NE	10032	5.5	4171	4.8	<i>41.6</i>
PO	4477	2.5	1834	2.1	<i>41.0</i>
UK	26947	14.9	10582	12.3	<i>39.3</i>
GR	4016	2.2	1431	1.7	<i>35.6</i>
LU	39	.0	*	*	*
<b>Total</b>	181455	100.0	86263	100.0	<i>47.5</i>

Source: SOCRATES Evaluation

Table 3.10 presents absolute numbers and percentages of 'estimated' and 'realised' mobility, and take-up rates within the ERASMUS programme by host country, in 1997/98. Almost one out of four (24.3%) ERASMUS students were (in 1997/98) studying in the UK. Other popular destination countries, within ERASMUS students, were France (17.6%), Spain (13.2%),

Germany (12.7%), and Italy (6.6%). The high demand for study in the UK is evident in the 'take-up' rate within the ERASMUS programme. When study places in the UK are available to students the take-up rate is, by far, the highest, with 65.6% and only compares with Ireland (also an English speaking country) with 62.4%. These two countries are followed by Spain (53.7%), and France (48.2%), while this ratio was lowest in the case of ERASMUS study places in Greece (22.8%), Portugal (29.3%), Luxembourg (29.6%), Iceland (29.9%), and Finland (32%).

**Table 3.10 Host country of the 'estimated' and 'actual' numbers of ERASMUS students in 1997/98**  
(absolute numbers and percentages)

Host country	estimated		actual		'Take-up' rate
	N	(%)	N	(%)	(%)
<b>UK</b>	31925	17.6	20938	24.3	<b>65.6</b>
<b>IR</b>	4629	2.6	2844	3.3	<b>61.4</b>
<b>SP</b>	21294	11.7	11.426	13.2	<b>53.7</b>
<b>FR</b>	31547	17.4	15193	17.6	<b>48.2</b>
<b>NE</b>	10548	5.8	4.939	5.7	<b>46.8</b>
<b>SW</b>	6646	3.7	2941	3.4	<b>44.3</b>
<b>AU</b>	4040	2.2	1744	2.0	<b>43.2</b>
<b>GE</b>	26050	14.4	10991	12.7	<b>42.2</b>
<b>IT</b>	14739	8.1	5697	6.6	<b>38.7</b>
<b>DE</b>	4281	2.4	1562	1.8	<b>36.5</b>
<b>BE</b>	8094	4.5	2855	3.3	<b>35.3</b>
<b>NO</b>	2538	1.4	818	0.9	<b>32.2</b>
<b>FI</b>	5738	3.2	1836	2.1	<b>32.0</b>
<b>IS</b>	294	0.2	88	0.1	<b>29.9</b>
<b>LU</b>	27	0.0	8	0.0	<b>29.6</b>
<b>PO</b>	4710	2.6	1382	1.6	<b>29.3</b>
<b>GR</b>	4355	2.4	994	1.2	<b>22.8</b>
<b>Total</b>	181455	100.0	86256	100.0	<b>47.5</b>

Source: SOCRATES Evaluation

The ratio of incoming/outgoing ERASMUS students in 1997/98 is presented below in Table 3.11. Most countries have more students sent than hosted within the ERASMUS programme, while there is almost parity in France. Three countries host more students than sent (UK, Ireland, Netherlands). The UK and Ireland receive about double as many students as they send abroad.

**Table 3.11 Number and ratio of incoming and outgoing ERASMUS students, 1997/98**

Country	outgoing	incoming	ratio	Country	outgoing	incoming	ratio
AU	2438	1744	1.4	LU	*	8	.0
BE	4233	2855	1.5	NE	4171	4.939	0.8
DE	1796	1562	1.1	PO	1834	1382	1.3
FI	3052	1836	1.7	SP	12468	11.426	1.1
FR	15263	15193	1.0	SW	3173	2941	1.1
GE	13785	10991	1.2	UK	10582	20938	0.5
GR	1431	994	1.4	IS	123	88	1.4
IR	1509	2844	0.5	NO	1071	818	1.3
IT	9334	5697	1.7				
				Total	86263	86256	

Source: SOCRATES Evaluation

Annual flows and patterns of student mobility within the EU ERASMUS programme are presented below in Table 3.12 (for 1990/2000)<sup>5</sup>. A total of 97,033 students studied in another EU-EEA country within ERASMUS. The UK was the most popular destination country with 20.6%, followed by France (with 17.1%), Spain (15.1%), Germany (12.6%). Almost two-thirds of all ERASMUS students were studying in four countries (UK, France, Germany, Spain). The UK was the most popular destination country among students from most countries. Exceptions were Italy, Belgium, Portugal, Greece, Ireland, and Luxembourg. Countries sending to the UK more students than average were France (34.5%), Denmark (29.3%), Sweden (27.3%), Finland (26.3%), Germany (25.5%), Netherlands (25.4%).

When these flows of ERASMUS mobile students were compared with those of year 1994/95<sup>6</sup> no major differences were found which indicate the relative stability of such flows. The only exception was that in 1994/5 Germany was ranked third most popular destination country while Spain was in fourth position which suggests that in the course of the 1990s Spain had overtaken Germany.

<sup>5</sup> Data were obtained from the European Commission's website at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/erasmus/stat.html>

<sup>6</sup> Data for the year 1994-95 were taken from 'ERASMUS Student Mobility 1994/95-1995/96. A Statistical Overview'. Document produced by the European Commission, Directorate General XXII, Education Training and Youth, 1997, Brussels. For more details see Appendix 1.

**Table 3.12 Actual student mobility within the ERASMUS programme, by country of home institution,  
and host country in 1999/2000**

<i>country of host institution</i>																		
chi	UK	FR	SP	GE	IT	NE	SW	BE	IR	FI	AU	PO	DE	G R	NO	IS	LU	% of total EU
FR	34.5	-	18.4	16.9	6.1	4.2	3.8	1.8	5.7	1.9	1.8	1.5	1.7	0.8	0.8	0.0	0.0	17.0
SP	21.1	20.1	-	15.1	14.9	6.0	2.9	5.4	2.6	2.3	1.6	3.8	2.4	1.0	0.7	0.1	0.0	16.7
GE	25.5	20.5	17.0	-	8.1	5.4	6.2	1.9	4.6	3.0	1.8	1.4	1.8	1.0	1.6	0.2	0.0	15.9
IT	14.5	18.5	26.9	14.2		4.0	3.0	4.2	1.6	2.3	2.8	3.3	2.3	1.3	1.1	0.1	0.0	12.6
UK	-	35.1	18.7	16.0	8.8	5.2	3.4	2.3	0.8	3.3	1.8	1.2	2.0	1.0	0.5	0.1	0.0	10.2
BE	12.9	18.0	20.2	9.4	8.3	10.2	3.4	-	2.8	4.3	2.3	3.4	2.2	1.4	1.2	0.1	0	4.5
NE	25.4	12.8	15.2	10.2	4.5		8.8	5.5	2.9	4.8	2.0	1.6	2.6	1.2	2.3	0.2	0.0	4.5
FI	26.3	10.4	8.5	19.0	4.2	11.5	2.8	3.4	3.5	-	5.0	1.1	1.1	2.3	0.9	0.1	0.0	3.4
SW	27.3	16.0	8.9	19.5	3.1	9.5	-	2.9	2.5	0.4	6.4	0.7	1.0	0.9	0.7	0.1	0.0	3.1
AU	16.9	16.0	15.0	7.6	11.8	7.2	7.1	3.0	3.7	3.7	-	1.7	2.4	1.3	2.1	0.4	0.1	3.0
PO	10.5	16.2	21.4	11.3	14.3	4.9	3.6	6.6	1.2	2.5	1.9	-	2.7	1.8	1.1	0.0	0.0	2.5
GR	13.3	19.0	12.0	14.9	10.4	6.8	3.6	6.0	1.7	3.3	3.6	2.3	2.6	-	0.5	0.0	0.0	1.9
DE	29.3	12.9	13.3	15.6	5.1	7.5	1.4	2.9	2.8	0.9	3.9	0.6	-	1.0	1.8	0.8	0	1.8
IR	3.8	36.8	13.2	24.1	4.2	4.8	2.6	3.9	-	1.7	2.6	0.5	1.1	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.0	1.7
NO	20.1	15.3	13.6	14.4	6.1	9.7	3.8	2.7	2.2	1.8	3.4	1.3	4.7	1.0	-	0.0	0.0	1.1
LU	4.7	32.9	10.6	18.8	4.7	1.2	2.4	0.0	1.2	1.2	15.3	5.9	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	-	0.1
IS	9.4	12.3	9.4	17.4	12.3	2.2	5.8	2.2	0.0	3.6	3.6	0.0	21.7	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.1
LI	66.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
EUI	41.7	33.3	0.0	8.3	0.0	8.3	8.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>total</i>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>15.1</b>	<b>12.6</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: European Commission**



### *Educational mobility within other EU-funded programmes*

Since mid-eighties the European Union has launched a series of programmes and schemes providing young researchers with support to conduct research in an EU country other than their own. Within such programmes, that form part of the EU RTD policy, grants were made available to successful applicants (research fellows). This section explores flow patterns within such EU programmes, from 1987 to 1993, as presented in programme evaluation studies.

The Maiworm & Teichler (1997) study found that a total of 3,831 fellows<sup>7</sup> received EU support under EU research fellow programmes. This study also found that 'about 70% of the fellows between 1987 and 1993 were from five countries: Germany (16%), France (16%), Spain (14%), Italy (14%) and Greece (10%). Only seven percent of the fellows were from the UK...Two countries clearly stood out in hosting fellows over the whole period under consideration: the United Kingdom which hosted about one third of the fellows, and France which hosted about one quarter<sup>8</sup>. The host/sent ratio for the UK was 4.5:1.

Other countries receiving more fellows than sending abroad were France, Belgium, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden. Four EU countries (Greece, Portugal, Spain, Austria, and Ireland) sent more than twice as many fellows as received. The UK was most often chosen as host country by fellows from Portugal (52%), Sweden (50%), and from France (39%). France was most often the host country for fellows from Belgium (44%), the UK (35%), Germany and (33%)<sup>9</sup>. No major differences were found with respect to subject area and host and home country.

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<sup>7</sup> It must be noted that the data do not distinguish between research fellows at a doctoral or post-doctoral level. Mobility of postdoctoral researchers is beyond the scope of this project. However, patterns and flows identified are similar to those identified in other sections of this chapter, and therefore, provide a broader basis for conclusions to be drawn.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, p. 18-19.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, p.20-21.

## The Training and Mobility of Researchers Programme

The EU launched in 1994 the Training and Mobility of Researchers (TMR) programme. TMR aimed at promoting the mobility of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers in the EU, providing research grants (Marie Curie Fellowships). A total of 13,991 researchers applied for such a grant in the period 1994-1998, of which 5,946 (42.5%) applied for a doctoral and 8,045 (57.5%) for a postdoctoral level grant<sup>10</sup>. As presented in Table 3.13 the three panels receiving the highest proportions of all applicants were Life sciences (30.7%), Physics (20.2%), and Economics (14.5%). At doctoral level the three panels receiving the highest proportions of applicants were Life sciences (25.3%), Economics (22%), and Physics (17.4%).

**Table 3.13 TMR applicants by level and panel, 1994-98**

Panel	Doctoral level		Postdoctoral level		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Life sciences</b>	1504	25.3	2799	34.8	4302	<i>30.7</i>
<b>Physics</b>	1035	17.4	1798	22.3	2833	<i>20.2</i>
<b>Economics</b>	1307	22	721	9	2028	<i>14.5</i>
<b>Chemistry</b>	510	8.6	1230	15.3	1740	<i>12.4</i>
<b>Engineering</b>	715	12	451	5.6	1166	<i>8.3</i>
<b>Mathematics</b>	537	9	627	7.8	1164	<i>8.3</i>
<b>Earth sciences</b>	338	5.7	420	5.2	758	<i>5.4</i>
<b>Total</b>	5946	100	8046	100	13991	<i>100</i>

Table 3.14 below presents TMR applicants (absolute numbers and percentages) by level and country of nationality. Italy, Spain, France, Germany, and Greece were the five countries of nationality with the highest proportion of applicants contributing more than 75% of all applicants. The proportion of applicants for a doctoral level grant is -in general- larger in South European countries (Portugal, Italy, Greece) than in countries of Northern Europe (with the exception of Denmark). It is also noteworthy that the proportion of UK applicants is particularly low (with only 5.7% of all applicants). This proportion is even lower (2%) in the case of doctoral level applicants.

<sup>10</sup> The data on mobility within the TMR programme are obtained from the EU-funded study by Louise Ackers et. al. (2001) 'The participation of women researchers in the TMR Marie Curie Fellowships' Luxembourg, Office for the Official Publications of the European Communities.

**Table 3.14 TMR applicants by level and country of nationality, 1994-1998**

Country	Doctoral level		Postdoctoral level		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
IT	1637	27.5	1098	13.6	2735	19.5
SP	764	12.8	1746	21.7	2510	17.9
FR	808	13.6	1531	19	2339	16.7
GE	958	16.1	1221	15.2	2179	15.6
GR	608	10.2	450	5.6	1058	7.6
UK	123	2	677	8.4	800	5.7
NE	204	3.4	349	4.3	553	3.9
BE	180	3	224	2.8	404	2.9
IR	130	2.2	166	2	296	2.1
PO	218	3.7	84	1	302	2.1
SW	71	1.2	134	1.7	205	1.5
AU	72	1.2	83	1	155	1.1
DE	78	1.3	75	0.9	153	1
FI	37	0.6	115	1.4	152	1
IL	14	0.2	42	0.5	56	0.4
NO	26	0.4	36	0.4	62	0.4
IS	15	0.2	5	.0	20	0.1
LU	2	.0	10	0.1	12	.0
LI	1	.0	-	-	1	.0
<b>Total</b>	5946	100	8046	100	13992	100

Table 3.15 below presents TMR applicants (absolute numbers and percentages) by level and host country. Over one out of three applicants chose the UK as host country (36%). This proportion is even higher (with 44.1%) among doctoral level students. Five countries (UK, France, Germany, Spain, and Italy) contribute more than three fourths (77.2%) of all applicants. A total of 2,899 Marie Curie Fellowships were awarded in both categories (doctoral and postdoctoral level).

The Ackers et. al. (2001) study also found that rates of successful applicants vary across countries of nationality and country that applicants wish to be hosted. In particular the study found that 'at first glance, applicants from Northern European countries appear to be considerably more successful than applicants from South European countries. Closer analysis suggests that the difference is at least explained by an unequal distribution among the categories' (i.e. doctoral and postdoctoral level)... 'Even though the distribution of applicants

according to category has an impact on the overall rate of success, there still are some national differences. In category B20 (i.e. doctoral level) applicants from Belgium, Germany, Ireland and the Netherlands are relatively successful, having a rate of success which exceeds 15 per cent compared to an all-European average of 12 per cent. In category B30 (postdoctoral level), applicants from Sweden have the highest rate of success with 39% followed by Denmark, Finland, Austria and the Netherlands. In both categories the rate of success is comparably low among applicants from Spain, Greece, Norway, and Portugal.' (pp.23-24).

**Table 3.15 TMR applicants by level and host country of application, 1994-1998**

Country	Doctoral level		Postdoctoral level		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
UK	2625	44.1	2404	29.9	5029	36
FR	1068	18	1750	21.7	2818	20.1
GE	439	7.3	897	11.1	1336	9.5
NE	281	4.7	565	7	846	6
SP	369	6.2	454	5.6	823	5.9
IT	234	3.9	568	7	802	5.7
BE	314	5.7	347	4.3	661	4.7
SW	111	1.9	274	3.4	385	2.7
DE	124	2.1	166	2.1	290	2.1
AU	80	1.3	121	1.5	201	1.4
IR	85	1.4	101	1.2	186	1.3
NO	56	0.9	107	1.3	163	1.2
PO	50	0.8	91	1.1	141	1
FI	34	0.6	63	0.8	97	0.7
GR	39	0.6	57	0.7	96	0.7
SZ	19	0.3	42	0.5	61	0.4
IL	13	0.2	34	0.4	47	0.3
LU	3	.0	4	.0	7	.0
<b>Total</b>	5946	100	8046	100	13992	100

This study also found differences of success rates in terms of host country of applicants, even taking category into account. In particular, 'the success rate among people applying for a grant in Spain, Greece, Italy and Portugal is significantly lower than the average rate of success.' (p. 24). As the authors note this may reflect lower scores awarded for the quality of host institutions.

This section has explored flow patterns in EU mobility programmes (other than ERASMUS and LINGUA) and has shown not only asymmetries but also the dominant position of the UK as the preferred place to study in the EU among young European researchers. This finding further confirms the dominant position of the UK within ERASMUS and LINGUA programmes and its popularity among mobile students in the EU. In the following section a more detailed overview of EU student flows towards the UK is provided.

#### **4 Students from EU countries in UK higher education institutions: enrolments and applications**

This section gives a more detailed overview of EU student mobility in the UK, the most popular EU country among EU mobile students. Specifically, it explores main characteristics, patterns and trends of EU student mobility towards the UK. The first part focuses on EU domiciled student enrolments in UK higher education institutions. The second part focuses on trends and patterns in the demand for UK undergraduate education by EU domiciled students. Analysis is based on data held by HESA (the UK Higher Education Statistical Agency), UCAS (the UK Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) and some recent relevant literature.

##### *EU domiciled student enrolments in the UK*

A recent study, conducted by K. Maxey (Maxey., 2000) for the Council for Education in the Commonwealth and UKCOSA (The UK Council for International Education), explored the development of international students in the UK since 1979/1980. This study brought together and compared available data on international students in the UK, held by the British Council, DfEE, and HESA.

In spite of the methodological difficulties involved (see K. Maxey, 2000), the study showed that, in the period under examination, the number of students from EU countries studying in the UK has grown dramatically (see above Table 3.16). Specifically, the study estimated that, from 1979/80 to 1998/99, the total number of international students studying in UK tertiary education institutions (including higher and further education institutions) has more than doubled (from 83,503 to 187,452 a total rate of increase 124%). In the same period, however, the number of EU students studying in the UK has increased from 6,752 (in 1979/80) to 87,947 (in 1998/99), a total increase of 1203%. That is, in 1998/99 there were thirteen times as many EU students in the UK as in 1979/80. Students from EU countries in 1979/80 accounted for 8% of the total number of international students in UK tertiary education institutions. This proportion increased to 47% of all international students in 1998/99.

**Table 3.16 International students in the UK, 1979/80 to 1998/99**

Year	79/80	88/89	% change since 79/80	94/95	% change since 79/80	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99 interim	% change since 79/80
UK further education colleges										
total international students	26,729	9983	-63%	2420	-91%	11,557	12,249	12,034	13,356	-50%
EU students	1,475	3668	149%	820	-44%	4,257	4,538	4306	4128	180%
EU students as % of total	6%	37%		34%		37%	37%	36%	31%	
UK higher education colleges										
total international students	56774	66130	16%	122445	116%	143965	160056	172316	174096	207%
EU students	5227	15041	185%	53256	909%	64558	74361	81859	83819	1488%
EU students as % of total	9%	23%		43%			46%	48%	48%	
UK tertiary education										
total international students	83503	76325	-9%	124865	50%	155522	172305	184350	187452	124%
EU students	6752	18709	177%	54076	701%	68815	78899	86165	87947	1203%
EU students as % of total	8%	25%		43%		44%	46%	47%	47%	

Source: K. Maxey, 2000

Moreover, according to HESA<sup>11</sup> the rate of increase of EU domicile students, enrolled in UK higher education institutions, was in recent years higher than the rate of increase of UK domiciled students. This was, for example, the case between 1995/96 and 1996/97 when EU domiciled student enrolments increased by 9% against 2% of UK domiciled students, and 2% of overseas (other than the European Union) domiciled students. Between 1996/97 and 1997/98 the rate of increase of EU domiciled students was 6%, while of UK domiciled was 2% and other overseas domiciled students was 7%. Between 1997/98 and 1998/1999 the rates of increase were 2% for UK domiciled, 6% of EU domiciled, and 1% of other overseas domiciled students. Between 1998/99 and 1999/2000 the rates of increase were 1% of UK domicile, of EU domiciled 1%, and of other overseas domiciled 4%.

Table 3.17 below presents proportions of EU domiciled students enrolled in UK higher education, by EU country of domicile, level of study, and sex in 1997/98 (HESA, 1997/98).

<sup>11</sup> See HESA Press Releases: No. 13 of 29-4-97, No. 22 of 28-4-98, No. 29 of 27-4-99, No. 38 of 28-4-2000.

**Table 3.17 EU domiciled students in UK higher education by EU country of domicile level of study, and sex, 1997/98**

level	sex	GR	IR	GE	FR	SP	IT	SW	NE	FI	BE	PO	DE	AU	LU	EU
<b>pr</b>	<i>t</i>	8,6	6,2	13,5	7,3	8,4	21,1	3,8	10,2	4,4	9,5	27,6	9,0	6,8	7,1	9,5
	f	42,5	42,4	33,9	45,4	49,9	47,7	35,4	37,4	41,1	41,3	43,7	45,2	32,4	36,1	42,0
	m	57,5	57,6	66,1	54,6	50,1	52,3	64,6	62,6	58,9	58,7	56,3	54,8	67,6	63,9	58,0
<b>pt</b>	<i>t</i>	14,9	11,7	11,6	12,4	11,2	15,1	13,0	26,9	9,5	12,4	12,5	15,0	12,1	10,4	13,3
	f	62,2	65,7	65,4	73,4	71,1	65,3	71,1	47,6	67,5	65,2	67,2	66,7	62,2	94,3	65,2
	m	37,8	34,3	34,6	26,6	28,9	34,7	28,9	52,4	32,5	34,8	32,8	33,3	37,8	5,7	34,8
<b>fd</b>	<i>t</i>	64,4	56,5	38,9	43,5	43,5	35,3	45,3	37,0	60,8	53,4	44,6	48,7	41,5	73,5	50,9
	f	37,8	52,8	55,4	45,1	48,7	54	66,8	52,8	66,2	48,2	41,6	67,1	51,8	48,9	47,6
	m	62,2	47,2	44,6	54,9	51,3	46	33,2	47,2	33,8	51,8	58,4	32,9	48,2	51,1	52,4
<b>ou</b>	<i>t</i>	4,4	22,8	29,9	30,5	32,6	24,8	31,9	18,5	21,8	18,7	11,3	20,0	33,1	3,3	20,5
	f	43,5	77,4	52,5	59,8	61,4	58,6	65,2	55	61,7	56,0	64,7	63,2	53,6	41,2	60,9
	m	56,5	22,6	47,5	40,2	38,6	41,4	34,8	45	38,3	44,0	35,3	36,8	46,4	58,8	39,1
<b>t</b>	f	39,2	57,8	49,4	50,3	53,4	53,5	61,6	46,3	62,0	48,3	46,4	59,3	49,0	49,7	49,4
	m	60,8	42,2	50,6	49,7	46,6	46,5	38,4	53,7	38,0	51,7	53,6	40,7	51,0	50,3	50,6
<b>GT</b>		25602	15894	13037	12844	7220	5254	3341	2817	2430	2169	1980	1744	1047	509	95888
<b>%</b>		26,7	16,6	13,6	13,4	7,5	5,5	3,5	2,9	2,5	2,3	2,1	1,8	1,1	0,53	100

pr= postgraduate research

pt= postgraduate taught

fd= first degree

ou= other undergraduate

Source: HESA

f= female

m= male

t= total

GT= Grand Total (absolute numbers)



There were 95,888 EU domiciled students studying in UK higher education in 1997/98. More than one out of five were Greek domiciled students (25,602 and 26.7%). Large categories were also Irish (15,894 and 16.6%), German (13,037 and 13.6%), French (12,844 and 13.4%), Spanish (7,220 and 7.5%), and Italian domiciled students (5,254 and 5.5%). Small minorities were Swedish (3,341 and 3.5%), Dutch (2,817 and 2.9%), Finnish (2,430 and 2.5%), Belgian (2,169 and 2.3%), Portuguese (1,980 and 2.1%), Danish (1,744 and 1.8%), and Austrian domiciled students (1,047 and 1.1%).

About half of EU domiciled students (50.9%) were enrolled in the UK for a first degree. A proportion of 13.3% were enrolled for a taught postgraduate degree (mainly Masters'), less than one-tenth (9.5%) were enrolled in a postgraduate research course (mainly MPhil/PhD), while over one out of five (20.5%) were other undergraduate students (e.g. exchange or visiting students, Higher National Diploma students). When distributions of level of study by country of domicile were examined the following were found: The countries with a proportion of students enrolled for a first degree, higher than the EU average were Luxembourg (73.5%), Greece (64.4%), Finland (60.8%), Ireland (56.5%), and Belgium (53.4%). Those with a lower proportion were Italy (35.3%), the Netherlands (37%), Germany (38.9%), Austria (41.5%), France (43.5%), Spain (43.5%), Portugal (44.6%), Sweden (45.3%), and Denmark (48, 7%).

The countries with a higher proportion of students enrolled as 'other undergraduates'<sup>12</sup> than the EU average, were Austria (33.1%), Spain (32.6%), Sweden (31.9%), France (30.5%) Germany (29.9%), Italy (24.8%), Ireland (22.8%), and Finland (21.8%). Those with a lower proportion than EU average were Luxembourg (3.3%), Greece (4.4%), Portugal (11.3%), Netherlands (18.5%), Belgium (18.7%), and Denmark (20%).

The countries with a proportion of students enrolled at postgraduate taught level, higher than the EU average, were the Netherlands (with 26.9%), Italy (15.1%), Denmark (15%), and Greece (14.9%). Those with lower proportions of students than the EU average, were Finland (9.5%), Luxembourg (10.4%), Spain (11.2%), Germany (11.6%), Ireland (11.7%), Austria (12.1%), Belgium (12.4%), France (12.4%), Portugal (12.5%), and Sweden (13%).

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<sup>12</sup> including mainly ERASMUS students.

The countries with a higher proportion of students enrolled at postgraduate research level than the EU average, were Portugal (with 27.6%), Italy (21.1%), Germany (13.5%), and the Netherlands (10.2%). Those lower than the EU average were Sweden (3.8%), Finland (4.4%), Ireland (6.2%), Austria (6.8%) Luxembourg (7.1%), France (7.3%), Spain (8.4%), and Greece (9%), while Belgium was on EU average (9.5%).

Of EU domiciled students enrolled in UK higher education institutions, males were slightly more than females (with 50.6% males against 49.4% females). When sex distributions by country of domicile were examined the following were observed: The countries with higher a proportion of males than the EU average were Greece (60.8% male and 39.2% female), the Netherlands (53.7% and 46.3%), Portugal (53.6% and 46.4%), Belgium (51.7% and 48.3%) and Austria (51% and 49%). On the contrary, the countries with a higher proportion of females were Finland (with 62% female and 38% male), Sweden (61.6% and 38.4%), Denmark (59.3% and 40.7%), Ireland (57.8% and 42.2%), Italy (53.5% and 46.5%), Spain (53.4% and 46.6%), France (50.3% and 49.7%) and Luxembourg (50.3% and 49.7%). Sex distribution of students domiciled in Germany was on EU average. That is, overall EU student mobility in the UK is more 'male' than 'female'. It is even more so among Greek, Dutch, Portuguese, Belgian, and Austrian domiciled students. On the contrary, student mobility in the UK is more female among students domiciled in Scandinavian countries (Finland, Sweden, Denmark), Ireland, Italy, Spain, France and Luxembourg.

When sex distributions by level of study were examined some noteworthy differences were found. Specifically, more males than females were enrolled for a first degree (52.4% and 47.6% respectively), and at postgraduate research level (58% male, 42% female). More females than males were enrolled at other undergraduate (60.9% and 39.1% respectively) and at postgraduate taught level (65.2% female and 34.8%). When sex distributions by level of study and EU country of domicile were examined the following were observed: At postgraduate research level, the proportion of male students was higher than female students across students domiciled in all countries. The countries with a higher proportion of male students than the EU average were Austria (with 67.6% males), Germany (66.1), Sweden (64.6%), Luxembourg (63.95), the Netherlands (62.6%), Finland (58.9%), and Belgium (58.7%). The countries with a higher proportion of female students, than the EU average, were Spain (with 49.9% females), Italy (47.7%), France (45.4%), Denmark (45.2%), Portugal

(43.7%), Greece (42.5%), and Ireland (42.4%). That is, EU student mobility at postgraduate research level in the UK, is more 'male' than 'female'. It is even more so among Austrian, German, Swedish, Luxembourgian, and Dutch domiciled students.

At postgraduate taught level, the proportion of female students was higher than males across all countries, with only exception being students domiciled in the Netherlands. The countries with a higher proportion of female students than the EU average, were Luxembourg (with 94.3% females), France (73.4%) Spain (71.1%), Sweden (71.1%), Finland (67.5%), Portugal (67.2%), Denmark, (66.7%), Ireland (65.7%), Germany (65.4%), and Italy (65.3%). The countries with a higher proportion of male students than the EU average were Austria (37.8%) and Greece (37.8%) while Belgium was on EU average. Only exception were Dutch domiciled students with more males (52.4%) than females (47.6%) enrolled at postgraduate taught level in the UK. That is, EU student mobility at postgraduate taught level in the UK, is more 'female' than 'male', with the only exception of Dutch students. It is even more so among students domiciled in Luxembourg, France, Scandinavian (Swedish, Finnish, Danish) countries, Spain, and Portugal, Ireland, Germany and Italy.

At first degree level, the countries with a higher proportion of male than female students than the EU average were Greece, France, Spain, Belgium, Portugal, and Luxembourg. The countries with a proportion of male students higher than the EU average, were Greece (with 62.2% males), Portugal (58.4%), and France (54.8%). The countries with a higher proportion of female students than the EU average were Denmark (with 67.1% females), Sweden (66.8%), Finland (66.2%), Germany (55.4%), Italy (54%), Ireland (52.8%), the Netherlands (52.8%), Luxembourg (48.9%), Spain (48.7%), and Belgium (48.2%). That is, EU student mobility at first degree level in the UK, is more 'male' than 'female'. It is even more so among Greek, Portuguese, and French domiciled students. At other undergraduate level, the proportion of females was higher than males across most countries, with the exception of Greece and Luxembourg. The countries with proportions of female students higher than the EU average were Ireland (with 77.4%), Sweden (65.2%), Portugal (64.7%), Denmark (63.2%), Finland (61.7%), and Spain (61.4%). The countries with proportions of male students higher than the EU average were Luxembourg (with 58.8% males), Greece (56.5%), Germany (47.5%), Austria (46.4%), the Netherlands (45%), Belgium (44%), Italy (41.4%), and France (40.2%).

### *EU domiciled student enrolments by subject*

Table 3.18 below presents proportions of EU students enrolled in UK higher education institutions in 1997/98, by subject studied and country of domicile. The most frequent subject EU students were enrolled in was 'business and administrative studies' with 16%. Large proportions of students were enrolled in 'engineering and technology' (14,2%), 'combined subjects' (11.9%), 'languages' (8.7%) 'social, economic and political studies' (8.3%). Smaller proportions were enrolled in 'subjects allied to medicine' (6%), 'biological sciences' (5.1%), 'physical sciences' (4.5%), 'creative arts & design' (4.5%), 'law' (3.7%), 'computer science' (3.7%), 'architecture, building & planning' (3.1%), 'education' (2.9%), 'humanities' (2.3%), 'librarianship & information science' (1.3%). 'mathematical sciences' (1.3%), 'medicine & dentistry' (1.2%), 'agriculture and related subjects' (1.2%), 'veterinary science' (0.1%).

The countries with a higher proportion of students enrolled in 'business and administrative studies' in the UK than the EU average, were Spain (22.1%), Denmark (20%), Sweden (19.5%), France (19.4%), the Netherlands (19.3%), Finland (18.4%), Greece (17.1%), and Germany (17%). The countries with a lower proportion of students, than the EU average, were Ireland (8%), Luxembourg (9.4%), Belgium (12%), Austria (13.1%), Italy (13.2%), and Portugal (13.7%). The countries with a higher proportion of students enrolled in 'engineering and technology' courses than the EU average, were Greece (24,5) % Portugal (16.7%), and France (16.7%). Those with a lower proportion were Denmark (5.6%), Sweden (6.8%), Luxembourg (6.9%), Italy (8.1%), Austria (8.3%), Finland (8.4%), Ireland (9%), Germany (9.1%), the Netherlands (9.2%), Belgium (9.4%), and Spain (10.4%).

The countries with a higher proportion of students enrolled in 'combined subjects' than the EU average, were Austria (21.3%), Germany (18%), Spain (16.9%), France (16.8%), Finland (16.4%), Italy (14.7%), Belgium (14.5), Denmark (13.6%), and Sweden (12.5%). Those with a lower proportion than the EU average were Greece (6.5%), Ireland (7%), Portugal (8.6%), and Luxembourg (10.4%). The countries with a higher proportion of student enrolled in courses in 'languages' than the EU average, were Luxembourg (16.5%), Spain (15.5%), Italy (14.3%), Sweden (14%), Belgium (11.6%), France (11.5%), and Germany (10,6%).

**Table 3.18 Proportions of EU students in the UK, by subject and country of domicile, 1997-98**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>GR</b>	<b>IR</b>	<b>GE</b>	<b>FR</b>	<b>SP</b>	<b>IT</b>	<b>SW</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>FI</b>	<b>BE</b>	<b>PO</b>	<b>DE</b>	<b>AU</b>	<b>LU</b>	<b>EU total</b>
Business & Administrative studies	17,1	8	17	19,4	22,1	13,2	19,5	19,3	18,4	12	13,7	20	13,1	9,4	<b>16</b>
Engineering & Technology	24,5	9	9,1	16,5	10,4	8,1	6,8	9,2	8,4	9,4	16,7	5,6	8,3	6,9	<b>14,2</b>
Combined	6,5	7	18	16,8	16,9	14,7	12,5	13,3	16,4	14,5	8,6	13,6	21,3	10,4	<b>11,9</b>
Languages	6,2	3,3	10,6	11,5	15,5	14,3	14	5,6	7,7	11,6	5,9	6,6	8,6	16,5	<b>8,7</b>
Social, Economic & Political studies	9	5	8,5	5,4	7,3	16,4	8	8,5	10,9	13,3	10,6	12,5	7,8	13,6	<b>8,3</b>
Subjects allied to medicine	1,8	27,2	1,7	0,9	1,6	1	2,6	3,8	4,2	1,7	1,9	2,4	2,2	0,8	<b>6</b>
Biological sciences	6,1	7,6	4	2,8	3,2	4,6	3,5	3,5	4,9	4,7	8	4,5	4,3	8,6	<b>5,1</b>
Physical sciences	3,1	4,6	4,8	7,7	4,2	5,6	2,1	6,6	2,8	4,3	4,4	2,4	3,1	5,1	<b>4,5</b>
Creative Arts & Design	3,4	3,8	5,7	2,5	4	4,3	12	3,5	8,9	4,9	8	12,6	6,4	4,3	<b>4,5</b>
Law	3,8	1,7	4,6	4,7	2,6	3,4	3,9	4,2	3,5	7	1,4	4,3	6,3	6,5	<b>3,7</b>
Computer science	6	3,6	1,9	2,9	2,5	1,5	2,7	7,2	2,4	2,7	3,6	1,1	3,1	3,7	<b>3,7</b>
Architecture, Building & Planning	3,4	5,2	3,4	1,3	2,1	2,3	1,7	2,7	2,3	2,3	4	2,2	3,5	1	<b>3,1</b>
Education	2	5,2	2	3	2,2	2,2	3,8	5,1	1,8	1,4	4,5	3,4	3,9	2,4	<b>2,9</b>
Humanities	1,5	1,7	4	1,5	1,5	3,8	2,7	2,2	3,9	4,1	1,8	3,9	3,2	3,3	<b>2,3</b>
Librarianship & information science	1,3	1,5	1,2	0,9	1,1	0,8	2,1	1,3	2,3	1,3	1,6	2,1	1,3	1,4	<b>1,3</b>
Mathematical sciences	2,1	0,7	1,3	0,9	0,9	1,6	0,7	0,6	0,4	1,7	2,2	0,8	1,1	2,4	<b>1,3</b>
Agriculture & related subjects	1,0	3,3	0,5	0,6	0,9	0,6	0,4	0,9	0,3	0,9	1,6	0,8	1,2	1,2	<b>1,2</b>
Medicine & Dentistry	1	1,4	1,7	0,7	0,9	1,6	0,6	2,2	0,4	2,1	1,3	1,2	1,2	2,6	<b>1,2</b>
Veterinary science	0,1	0,2	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,3	0,2	0,1	0,3	0,2	0,1	0,1	0	<b>0,1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: HESA

Those with a lower proportion than the EU average were Ireland (3.3%), the Netherlands (5.6%), Portugal (5.9%), Greece (6.2%), Denmark (6.6%), Finland (7.7%), and Austria (8.6%).

The countries with a higher proportion of students enrolled in 'social, economic and political studies' than the EU average, were Italy (16.4%), Luxembourg (13.6%), Belgium (13.3%), Denmark (12.5%), Finland (10.9%), Portugal (10.6%), Greece (9%), Germany (8.5%), the Netherlands (8.5%), and Sweden (8%). Those with a lower proportion than the EU average were Ireland (5%), France (5.4%), Spain (7.3%), and Austria (7.8%). The proportion of Irish students enrolled in 'subjects allied to medicine' was much higher than EU average with 27.2%).

The countries with a higher proportion of students enrolled in 'biological sciences' than the EU average, were Luxembourg (8.6%), Portugal (8%), Ireland (7.6%) and Greece (6.1%). Those with a lower proportion were France (2.8%), Spain (3.2%), the Netherlands (3.5%), and Sweden (3.5%). The countries with a higher proportion of students enrolled in 'creative arts and design' higher than the EU average, were Denmark (12.6%), Sweden (12%), Finland (8.9%), Portugal (8%), Austria (6.4%), and Germany (5.7%). Those with a lower proportion than the EU average, were France (2.5%), Greece (3.4%), the Netherlands (3.5%), and Ireland (3.8%). The countries with a higher proportion of students enrolled in 'physical sciences' than the EU average, were France (7.7%), the Netherlands (6.6%), Italy (5.6%) and Luxembourg (5.1%). Those with a lower proportion than the EU average were Sweden (0.4%), Denmark (2.4%), Finland (2.8%), Austria (3.1%), and Greece students (3.1%).

The countries with a higher proportion of students enrolled in 'computer sciences' courses, than the EU average were the Netherlands (7.2%) and Greece (6%). Those with a lower proportion were Denmark (1.1%), Italy (1.5%), Germany (1.9%), Finland (2.4%), Spain (2.5%), Sweden (2.7%), Belgium (2.7%), France (2.9%), Austria (3.1%), and Ireland (3.6%). The countries with a higher proportion of students enrolled in 'law' courses, than the EU average were Belgium (7%), Luxembourg (6.5%), Austria (6.3%), France (4.7%), Germany (4.6%), Denmark (4.3%), Sweden (3.9%), and Greece (3.8%). Those with a lower proportion than the EU average were Portugal (1.4%), Ireland (1.7%), Spain (2.6%), Italy (3.4%), and Finland (3.5%). The countries with a higher proportion of students enrolled in courses in

'architecture, building and planning' than the EU average, were Ireland (5.2%), Portugal (4%), Austria (3.5%), Germany (3.4%), and Greece (3.4%). Those with a lower proportion were Luxembourg (1%), France (1.3%), Sweden (1.7%), Spain (2.1%), Denmark (2.2%), Belgium (2.3%), Finland (2.3%), Italy (2.3%), and the Netherlands (2.7%).

### *Enrolments by subject and sex*

Table 3.19 below presents EU domiciled students enrolled in UK higher education institutions by sex. When sex distributions by subject were examined the following were observed: Although overall EU student mobility in the UK is more 'male' (50.6%) than 'female' (49.4%), this is not the case across all subjects. The proportion of females is higher than males in 'subjects allied to medicine' (81.2% females), 'languages' (74.5%), 'education' (70.5%), 'librarianship & Information science' (66.7%), 'biological sciences' (65.1%), 'creative arts and design' (63%), 'combined subjects' (58.3%), 'humanities' (58.1%), 'veterinary science' (55.9%), 'medicine & dentistry' (55.8%), 'law' (54.5%), and 'social economic & political studies' (50%).

**Table 3.19 EU domiciled student enrolments by subject and sex, 1997/98**

Subject	female	male
Engineering & Technology	15,2	84,8
Computer science	20,1	79,9
Mathematical sciences	30,5	69,5
Physical sciences	40,1	59,9
Agriculture & related subjects	41,0	59,0
Architecture, Building & Planning	43,2	56,8
Business & Administrative studies	43,6	56,4
Social, Economic & Political studies	50,0	50,0
Law	54,5	45,5
Medicine & Dentistry	55,8	44,2
Veterinary science	55,9	44,1
Humanities	58,1	41,9
Combined	58,3	41,7
Creative Arts & Design	63,0	37,0
Biological sciences	65,1	34,9
Librarianship & information science	66,7	33,3
Education	70,5	29,5
Languages	74,5	25,5
Subjects allied to medicine	81,2	18,8
<b>Total</b>	<b>49,4</b>	<b>50,6</b>

Source: HESA

The proportion of males is over the EU average in 'engineering and technology' (84.8% male), 'computer science' (79.9%), 'mathematical sciences' (69.5%), 'physical sciences' (59.9%),

'agriculture and related subjects' (59%), 'architecture, building and planning' (56.8%), and 'business and administrative studies' (56.4%).

### *EU domiciled student applications (undergraduate level)*

This section explores the demand for UK education by EU students. It analyses statistical data compiled by UCAS, the Universities and Colleges Admissions Services. These data include only EU students applying to UK universities for full-time undergraduate courses. No national level data were available for applicants to postgraduate and part time courses, as applications for these categories are directed to individual universities and colleges. In particular, this section analyses student demand by country of domicile and preferred subject group.

The demand for undergraduate courses in UK universities by EU students in the period 1994-1999 is presented in the Table 3.20 below.

**Table 3.20 EU undergraduate applicants by country of domicile, 1994-1999 (absolute numbers and percentages)**

Country	1994		1995		1996		1997		1998		1999		Total increase (%), 1994-1999
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
<b>FI</b>	65	0.3	270	1	626	2.2	1028	3.3	1047	3.7	853	3.2	<b>1212.3</b>
<b>SW</b>	271	1.4	420	1.6	645	2.3	1159	3.7	1391	5	1606	6	<b>492.6</b>
<b>AU</b>	77	0.4	140	0.5	205	0.7	291	0.9	291	1	322	1.2	<b>318.1</b>
<b>FR</b>	899	4.7	1201	4.7	1379	5	2122	6.9	2127	7.6	2486	9.3	<b>176.5</b>
<b>PO</b>	236	1.2	311	1.2	449	1.6	558	1.8	519	1.8	586	2.2	<b>148.3</b>
<b>LU</b>	130	0.6	151	0.5	155	0.5	202	0.6	245	0.8	262	0.9	<b>101.5</b>
<b>GR</b>	3519	18.7	4892	19.3	7038	25.5	8036	26.2	7538	27.2	6821	25.7	<b>93.8</b>
<b>DE</b>	232	1.2	289	1.1	353	1.2	459	1.5	447	1.6	446	1.6	<b>92.2</b>
<b>SP</b>	694	3.7	843	3.3	912	3.3	1070	3.4	1094	3.9	1297	4.9	<b>86.8</b>
<b>IT</b>	606	3.2	704	2.7	772	7.8	946	3	1035	3.7	1046	3.9	<b>72.6</b>
<b>GE</b>	1690	9	1844	7.2	1938	7	2543	8.3	2757	9.9	2841	10.7	<b>68.1</b>
<b>BE</b>	415	2.2	435	1.7	535	1.9	586	1.9	594	2.1	612	2.3	<b>47.4</b>
<b>NE</b>	354	1.8	375	1.4	384	1.3	387	1.2	415	1.5	404	1.5	<b>14.12</b>
<b>IR</b>	9563	50.9	13402	53	12145	44	11213	36.6	8144	29.4	6869	25.9	<b>-28.1</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>18751</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>25277</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>27536</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>30600</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>27644</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>26451</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>41.0</b>

Source: UCAS



The total number of EU applicants in 1999 was 26,541. The composition of the total number of EU applicants varied by EU country of domicile (defined by permanent address given by students). The highest absolute number of applicants was that of Irish applicants (6,869). This was followed by Greek applicants (6,821). Noteworthy, those two categories of students represented more than half (13,690 and 51,5%) of the total number of EU applicants (26,451). The lowest absolute number of applicants was from Luxembourg (262) and Austria (322). South European applicants (including Italian, Greek, Spanish, and Portuguese applicant students) represented 36,8% of all EU applicants, while applicants from Scandinavian EU countries (including Sweden, Finland, and Denmark) represented 10,9% (2,905 applicants). In the period examined (1994-1999) the total number of EU applicants was increased from 18,751 in 1994 to 26,451 in 1999, a total increase of EU students demand of 41% and an average annual rate of increase at 8,2%. The rate of increase of student applications varies significantly across different EU countries. The highest increase was marked in Finnish applicants (1,212%) and the absolute number increased from 65 in 1994 to 853 in 1999. This was followed by Swedish applicants that increased from 271 in 1994 to 1,606 in 1999, a total increase of 493%. The third group increased was Austrian applicant students. Austrian applicants were 77 in 1994 and 322 in 1999, a total increase of 318%. Those three countries (Sweden, Finland, Austria) became members of the EU in 1995. From that year onwards students from those countries acquired 'home' student status and tuition fees were removed. The lowest increase was observed in Dutch applicants, with 14%. French and German applicants increased by 177% and 68% respectively.

The total rate of increase, however, for the period of 1994 to 1997 (see Table 3.21 below) was much higher, at about 63% (EU applicants from 18,751 in 1994 increased at 30,600 in 1997). The average annual rate of increase, in the period 1994-1997, was 21%. A reduction of the rate of increase was observed, the years 1998 and 1999. Indeed, the total number of EU undergraduate applicants decreased from 30,600 in 1997 to 26,451 in 1999, a total decrease of 13,5%. This decrease coincides with the introduction of tuition fees in UK universities from the academic year 1998/99. The reduction of the total number of EU applicant students may be best interpreted as effecting from the increased cost of studying in UK universities<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The effect of demographic decline may not be considered relevant here as it would not be possible to explain neither the magnitude of the decrease nor the increase in subsequent years.

A closer examination of trends in EU student demand for UK undergraduate education suggests that the effect of the introduction of fees is not uniform across students from different EU countries while for some countries no clear effect can be observed. Irish applicants seem to have been mostly affected (both in absolute and relative sizes). Indeed, Irish applicants decreased from 11,213 in 1997 to 6,869 in 1999, a total decrease of 38,7%. It should be noted, however, that a decreasing trend of Irish applicants was observed prior to the introduction of fees in UK universities (from 13,402 in 1995 to 11,213 in 1997). The second significantly affected category were Greek applicants that decreased from 8,036 in 1997 to 6,821 in 1999, a total decrease of 15,1%<sup>2</sup>.

**Table 3.21 Rates of shifts of EU student applicants by country of domicile, 1994-1999 (undergraduate level only)**

Country	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	94-99	94-97	average annual increase 1994-99 (%)	average annual increase 1994-97 (%)	average annual shift 1997-99 (%)
FI	315.3	131.8	64.2	1.8	-18.5	1212.3	1481.5	242.4	493.8	-17.0
SW	54.9	53.5	79.6	20.0	15.4	492.6	327.6	98.5	109.2	38.5
AU	81.8	46.4	41.9	0	10.6	318.1	277.9	63.6	92.6	10.6
FR	33.5	14.8	53.8	0.2	16.8	176.5	136.0	35.3	45.3	17.1
PO	31.7	44.3	24.2	-6.9	12.9	148.3	136.4	29.6	45.4	5.0
LU	16.1	2.6	30.3	21.2	6.9	101.5	55.3	20.3	18.4	29.7
GR	39.0	43.8	14.1	-6.1	-9.5	93.8	128.3	18.7	42.7	-15.1
DE	24.5	22.1	30.0	-2.6	-0.2	92.2	97.8	18.4	32.6	-2.8
SP	21.4	8.1	17.3	2.2	18.5	86.8	54.1	17.3	18.0	21.2
IT	16.1	9.6	22.5	9.4	1.0	72.6	56.1	14.5	18.7	10.5
GE	9.1	5.0	31.2	8.4	3.0	68.1	50.4	13.6	16.8	11.7
BE	4.8	22.9	9.5	1.3	3.0	47.4	41.2	9.4	13.7	4.4
NE	5.9	2.4	0.7	7.2	-2.6	14.1	9.3	2.8	3.1	4.3
IR	40.1	-9.3	-7.6	-27.3	-15.6	-28.1	17.2	-5.6	5.7	-38.7
Tot	34.8	8.9	11.1	-9.6	-4.3	41.06	63.1	8.2	21.0	-13.5

Source: UCAS

The number of Portuguese and Danish applicants seem also to have been somewhat affected by the introduction of fees. From 558 Portuguese applicants in 1997 the number drop to 519 in 1998 (a decrease of 6.9%) to recover again in 1999 (586). The number of Danish

<sup>2</sup> The decrease of Irish and Greek applicant students may relate to the lower average per capita income level in those countries. It may also relate to other structural changes taking place at the time in those countries and, particularly, changes affecting the relationship between demand and supply for study in higher education.

applicants in 1997 were 459, drop in 1998 to 447 and 446 in 1999. Finnish applicants have also been decreased from 1,027 in 1997 and 1,047 in 1998 to 853 in 1999 (a decrease of 17%). The number of applicants from EU countries, such as Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and Austria seem to have been affected by only a smaller rate of annual increase after 1998. Although, more data are needed to estimate the long-term effect of the introduction of tuition fees on EU applicant students, some indication may already be given. Indeed, examining the development of the number of applicants in 1999, only a year after the first introduction of tuition fees, the number of applicants from certain EU countries is recovering. This is for example the case of applicants from Austria (from 1998 to 1999 a 10,6% increase), Belgium (3,0%), France (16,8), Germany (3%), Italy (1%), Luxembourg (6,9%), Portugal (12,9), Spain (18,5%), Sweden (15,4%). The temporal negative effect of the introduction of fees on EU student demand for study in the UK rather suggests that fees may not necessarily be a determinant factor with a longer term effect on mobile student flows in the EU. It is, therefore, rather reasonable to argue that the perceived long-term economic and social benefits of studying for a degree in the UK seem to overcome the cost differentials (including fees and maintenance costs) of study in the UK than at home. This may also be attributed to the fact mobile students is a social group of relatively well-off social background. It may also be argued that fees and, more broadly, the costs associated with study abroad, may affect the country and/or social intake of students and thus increase the elite character of student mobility in the EU.

#### *EU domiciled applicants by subject*

This section examines the characteristics of EU student demand for higher education by preferred subjects. Analysis is based on data obtained from UCAS (see Table 3.22 below). In 1994, the most popular subject groups among EU applicant students were 'business and administrative studies' with 2,300 applications (12.4%), followed by 'engineering and technology' with 2,122 applications (11.4%), 'subjects allied to medicine' with 2,101 applications (11.3%), and 'social studies' with 1,981 (10,6%). These four subject groups represented about 45.7%, almost half of the overall EU student demand by subject group. Significant EU student demand was also observed for 'biological sciences' with 1,251 applications (6.7%), 'languages and related subjects' with 904 (4.8%), and 'medicine and dentistry' with 880 (4.7%).

Certain changes of EU student demand by subject can be observed in the period 1994-1999. Although ‘business and administrative studies’ remain in 1999 the most popular subject with 2,854 (11.5%), the second most popular subject was ‘creative arts’ with 2,558 applications (9.5%).

**Table 3.22 EU applicants, by subject group, 1994-1999**

Subject group	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	(%) 1999
Agriculture and related subjects	460	700	635	658	574	495	1.8
Architecture, building and planning	581	800	867	870	735	679	2.5
Biological sciences	1251	1656	1790	1804	1671	1377	5.1
Business and administrative studies	2300	2854	3080	3516	3225	3091	11.5
Combined arts	395	504	446	410	334	284	1.0
Combined Sciences	93	98	136	188	154	174	0.6
Combined social studies	62	90	96	104	107	79	0.2
Creative arts	499	751	992	2276	2523	2558	9.5
Education	871	1535	1529	809	621	637	2.3
Engineering and technology	2122	2422	2637	2863	2335	2286	8.5
Humanities	316	412	423	409	342	319	1.1
Languages and related disciplines	904	1186	1270	1393	1127	1065	3.9
Mass communications and documentation	196	678	704	762	692	580	2.1
Mathematical sciences and informatics	554	774	923	1090	991	1053	3.9
Medicine/Dentistry	880	1072	1121	1048	980	949	3.5
No preferred subject group	1592	3251	4244	5065	4913	4889	18.3
Other general and combined studies	316	179	183	231	202	199	0.7
Physical sciences	553	733	682	664	513	603	2.2
Science combined with social studies or arts	131	159	231	507	290	289	1.0
Social studies	1981	2365	2532	2796	2617	2473	9.2
Social studies combined with arts	384	524	515	622	598	549	2.0
Subjects allied to medicine	2101	2781	2697	2749	2370	2048	7.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>18542</b>	<b>25524</b>	<b>27733</b>	<b>30834</b>	<b>27914</b>	<b>26676</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: UCAS

The third most popular subject group was ‘social studies’ (2,473 applications and 9.2%) followed by ‘engineering and technology’ (2,286 and 8.5%), ‘subjects allied to medicine’ (2,048 and 7.6%) and ‘biological sciences’ (1,377 and 5.1%).

As presented below, the overall demand in the period 1994-1999 has increased by 41.0% (see Table 3.23) and an average annual rate of increase of 8.2%. Exploring the development of the demand by subject group the following are observed: Demand for most subject groups has increased. Exceptions to this trend were ‘other general and combined studies’ (from 316 to 199, a decrease of 37%), ‘combined arts’ (from 395 to 284, a total decrease of 28.1%), ‘education’ (from 871 to 637, 26.8% decrease), and ‘subjects allied to medicine’ (from 2,101 to 2,048, a decrease of 2.5%).

The significant increase of subject group ‘creative arts’ should not be overestimated. This increase is accounted for mostly the merger of Art and Design Admissions Registry (ADAR) with UCAS from 1997 entry onwards. (This merger resulted in a significant increase of numbers from 992 applications in 1996 to 2,276 in 1997). A closer examination does, however, support the argument that ‘creative arts’ emerges as a dynamic subject group among EU students applying to study in the UK (undergraduate level of study). In particular, from 1994 to 1996 (prior to merger of data) the rate of increase has been 98.7%, compared to an average total increase of 49.5% in the same period.

**Table 3.23 EU student applicants, by subject group, 1994-1999 (undergraduate level only)**

Subject group	1994 (%)	1997 (%)	1999 (%)	overall increase (%), 94-99	average annual rate of increase (%), 94-99	rate of increase (%), 94-97	rate of increase (%), 97-99
Agriculture and related subjects	2.4	2.1	1.8	7.6	1.5	43.0	-24.7
Architecture, building and planning	3.1	2.8	2.5	16.8	3.3	49.7	-21.9
Biological sciences	6.7	5.9	5.1	10.0	2.0	44.2	-23.6
Business and administrative studies	12.4	11.4	11.5	34.3	6.8	52.8	-12.0
Combined arts	2.1	1.3	1.0	-28.1	-5.6	3.7	-30.7
Combined Sciences	0.5	0.6	0.6	87.0	17.4	102.1	-7.4
Combined social studies	0.3	0.3	0.2	27.4	5.4	67.7	-24.0
Creative arts	2.6	7.4	9.5	412.6	82.5	356.1	12.3
Education	4.6	2.6	2.3	-26.8	-5.3	-7.1	-21.2
Engineering and technology	11.4	9.3	8.5	7.7	1.5	34.9	-20.1
Humanities	1.7	1.3	1.1	0.9	0.1	29.4	-22.0
Languages and related disciplines	4.8	4.5	3.9	17.8	3.5	54.0	-23.5
Mass communications and documentation	1.0	2.5	2.1	195.9	39.1	288.7	-23.8
Mathematical sciences and informatics	2.9	3.5	3.9	90.0	18.0	96.7	-3.3
Medicine/Dentistry	4.7	3.4	3.5	7.8	1.5	19.0	-9.4
No preferred subject group	8.5	16.4	18.3	207.0	41.4	218.1	-3.4
Other general and combined studies	1.7	0.7	0.7	-37.0	-7.4	-26.8	-13.8
Physical sciences	2.9	2.2	2.2	9.0	1.8	20.0	-9.1
Science combined with social studies or arts	0.7	1.6	1.0	120.6	24.1	287.0	-42.9
Social studies	10.6	9.1	9.2	24.8	4.9	41.1	-11.5
Social studies combined with arts	2.0	2.0	2.0	42.9	8.5	61.9	-11.7
Subjects allied to medicine	11.3	8.9	7.6	-2.5	-0.5	30.8	-25.5
Total	100	100.0	100	43.8	8.7	66.2	-13.4

Source: UCAS

Moreover, from 1997 to 1999 (after data merging) the total rate of increase has been 12.3%. ‘Creative arts’ has been the only subject group that has continued to increase after 1998 (year

of introduction of tuition fees). Increase of 'creative arts' as a subject group preferred by EU students has been followed by 'mass communications and documentation' that almost tripled in the period of 1994 to 1999 (from 196 to 580, total increase 195.9%) with an average annual rate of increase at 39.1%. The third subject group in order of total rate of increase in the period 1994-1999 was 'science combined with social studies or arts' (120.6% followed by 'mathematical sciences and informatics' (90%), 'combined sciences' (87%) and 'social studies combined with arts' (42.9%). Other subject groups increased were: 'business and administrative studies' (34.3%), 'combined social studies' (27.4%), 'social studies' (24.8%), 'languages and related disciplines' (17.8%), 'architecture, building and planning' (16.8%), biological sciences' (10%), 'physical sciences' (9%), 'medicine/dentistry' (7.8%), 'engineering and technology' (7.7%) 'agriculture and related subjects' (7.6%), 'humanities' (0.9%).

In the period following the introduction of tuition fees (1998 and 1999) all subject groups have been affected (with the only exception of 'creative arts'), but not in a uniform way. As presented in Table 2.26, the subject groups mostly affected were 'science combined with social studies or arts' (from 507 in 1997 to 2,989 in 1999, a decrease of 42,9%), 'combined arts' (from 410 to 284, -30.7%), 'subjects allied to medicine' (from 2749 to 2048, -25,5%), 'agriculture and related subjects' (from 658 to 495, -24.7%), 'combined social studies' (from 104 to 97, -24%), 'mass communications and documentation' (from 762 to 580, -23.5%), 'languages and related disciplines' (from 1,393 to 1,065, -23.5%). The subject group less affected have been 'mathematical sciences and informatics' (from 1,090 to 1,053, -3.3%), 'combined sciences' (from 188 to 174, -7.4%) and 'business and administrative studies (from 3,516 to 3,091, -12.0%).

The data included in Table 3.24 below present proportions of EU applicant students in 1999, by preferred subject. There were up to six selections available to student applicants for the 1999 year of entry. (This had been reduced from eight selections applied from 1996 year of entry). Preferred subject was established if a majority of the selections made by individual students were for courses in the same subject group, and applicants are counted solely in that subject group. No distinction is made between HND and degree courses in the same subject group. Those in neither category are classified as having no preferred subject group.

Differences in EU student demand were observed among EU applicant students preferred subject groups. Specifically, Irish students most frequently applied for 'subjects allied to medicine' (22.3%). This was followed by 'education' (7.6%), 'business and administrative studies' (7.4%), and 'creative arts' (7%). Greek students most frequently applied for courses in 'engineering and technology' (14.6%). This was followed by 'business and administrative studies' (10.2%), 'social studies' (9.8%), 'biological sciences' (6%), and 'creative arts' (6%). It is, however, noteworthy that Greek students have the highest percentage among EU students of no preferred group identified (29%).

**Table 3.24 Percentages of EU applicant students by country of domicile and preferred subject group, 1999**

Subject group	AU	BE	DE	FI	FR	GE	GR	IR	IT	LU	NE	PO	SP	SW
Medicine/Dentistry	5.9	3.1	2.4	2.3	1.7	4.7	2.1	3.8	4.0	4.5	10.5	13.4	2.6	4.6
Subjects allied to medicine	2.4	2.2	2.2	1.1	1.5	1.6	3.4	22.3	2.1	1.5	2.6	4.4	2.3	1.9
Biological sciences	2.7	8.0	5.3	5.1	2.7	6.1	6.0	5.1	4.6	9.1	9.1	7.1	3.2	1.4
Agriculture and related subjects	0.9	1.7	0.4	1.1	1.4	0.6	0.5	4.4	0.5	1.1	6.1	1.8	0.8	1.8
Physical sciences	1.8	2.2	1.3	2.5	5.5	1.5	1.2	1.9	2.1	3.8	5.3	2.0	4.8	1.2
Mathematical sciences and informatics	5.9	3.1	2.4	0.8	4.9	2.2	4.8	3.9	3.9	3.4	2.4	3.5	4.0	3.6
Engineering and technology	2.7	6.5	3.1	1.8	12.3	3.7	14.6	5.8	6.0	6.4	7.3	11.0	11.3	3.5
Architecture, building and planning	0	1.9	1.1	0.9	0.7	1.6	3.1	4.0	1.5	1.5	0.9	2.9	1.8	1.5
Social studies	13.0	20.2	12.7	14.0	7.6	13.2	9.8	5.1	13.2	8.0	14.7	5.9	5.2	11.5
Business and administrative studies	16.7	10.2	13.4	12.3	14.6	15.7	10.2	7.4	10.4	8.0	12.2	9.3	21.4	14.1
Mass communications and documentation	0.9	1.6	3.8	5.7	1.7	3.0	1.4	1.7	2.8	1.9	1.2	2.7	2.0	3.4
Languages and related disciplines	2.4	5.2	4.4	6.4	8.0	5.8	3.0	1.7	6.5	16.0	3.4	2.7	3.9	2.8
Humanities	1.2	2.7	0.8	3.5	1.3	1.6	0.5	0.9	1.5	3.8	2.4	1.3	0.8	1.5
Creative arts	17.0	8.1	23.0	20.9	9.6	13.3	6.0	7.0	10.0	11.8	7.8	13.3	8.9	17.8
Education	0.3	0.6	0.2	0.9	0.5	0.7	0.4	7.6	0.2	0.7	1.7	0.3	0.6	0.3
Combined Sciences	0.9	0.8	0	0.1	1.5	0.8	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.7	0.7	0	0.5	0.7
Combined social studies	1.8	0.3	0	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.2
Combined arts	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.8	1.0	1.3	0.1	1.5	1.6	3.0	1.2	0.8	1.1	1.1
Science combined with social studies or arts	2.4	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.6	1.2	0.6	1.4	2.1	1.9	0.2	1.1	0.7	1.1
Social studies combined with arts	4.6	5.2	3.3	2.8	2.5	5.0	0.5	0.8	4.7	4.5	2.6	0.8	2.1	3.1
Other general and combined studies	1.5	1.1	0.8	1.2	0.7	1.9	0.5	0.3	0.9	0.3	1.2	0.6	0.2	0.6
No preferred subject group	12.7	11.6	16.5	12.8	18.4	14.0	29.0	11.2	19.6	7.2	10.7	13.8	20.6	18.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: UCAS

The most frequent subject groups German students applied for, were 'business and administrative studies' (15.7%), followed by 'creative arts' (13.3%), 'social studies' (13.2%), and 'biological sciences' (6.1%). French students most frequently applied for 'business and administrative studies' (14.6%), and 'engineering and technology' (12.3%). These are followed by 'creative Arts' (9.6%), 'languages and related disciplines' (8%), and 'social studies' (7.6%). Swedish students applied most frequently for 'creative arts' (17.8%), 'business and administrative studies' (14.1%), 'social studies' (11.5%), and medicine/dentistry (4.6%). Over one-fifth of Spanish students applied for 'business and administrative studies' (21.4%) subject group. This is followed by 'engineering and technology' (11.3%), 'creative arts' (8.9%), and 'social studies' (8.9%).

Italian students most frequently applied for 'social studies' (13.2%), 'business and administrative studies' (10.4%), and 'creative arts' (10%). These were followed by 'languages and related subjects' (6.5%) and 'engineering and technology' (6%). Almost a fifth of Finnish students applied (20.9%) for courses of 'creative arts' subject group. This was followed by 'social studies' (14%), 'business and administrative studies' (12.3%), and 'biological sciences' (5.1%). Belgian students applied most frequently for 'social studies' (20.2%) and 'business and administrative studies' (10.2%). These are followed by 'creative arts' (8.1%), 'biological sciences' (8%), and 'engineering and technology' (6.5%). The subjects most frequently Portuguese students applied for, were medicine/dentistry (13.4%) and 'creative arts' (13.3%). These were followed by 'business and administrative studies' (9.3%) 'engineering and technology' (11%), 'biological sciences' (7.1%) and 'social studies' (5.9%). More than one-fifth of Danish students applied for 'creative arts' (23%) subject group. This is followed by 'business and administrative studies' (13.4%), 'social studies' (12.7%), and 'biological sciences' (5.3%).

Dutch students applied more frequently for courses in 'social studies' (14.7%), and 'business and administrative studies' (12.2%). These were followed by 'medicine/dentistry' (10.5%), 'biological sciences' (9.1%), 'creative arts' (7.8%), 'engineering and technology' (7.3%), and 'agriculture and related subjects' (6.1%). The most frequent subjects Austrian students applied for were 'creative arts' (17%), 'business and administrative studies' (16.7%) and 'social studies' (13%). These were followed by medicine/dentistry (5.9%) and 'mathematical sciences and informatics' (5.9%). Luxembourg domiciled students most frequently applied for courses in



'languages and related subjects' (16%), and 'creative arts' (11.8%). These were followed by 'biological sciences' (9.1%), 'social studies' (8%) and 'business and administrative studies' (8%), and 'engineering and technology' (6.4%).

### *Acceptances*

Data of EU accepted students refer to offers of study places made by UK institutions (and not of students actually enrolled). As presented in Table 3.25 below, the proportion of accepted students varied across students from different EU countries of domicile, and between 1994 and 1999. In particular, in 1994 the total proportion of accepted students was 29.6% while in 1999 this was 58%. The lowest proportion of accepted students in 1994 were Irish domiciled students (23.1%) followed by Greek (36.7%), and Swedish (47.2%) domiciled students.

**Table 3.25 EU applicant and accepted students, 1994 and 1999**

country	1994			1999		
	applicants	accepted	% accepted	applicants	accepted	% accepted
AU	77	42	54.5	322	193	59.9
BE	415	290	69.8	612	431	70.4
DE	232	128	55.1	446	269	60.3
FI	65	38	58.4	853	557	65.2
FR	899	487	54.1	2486	1514	60.9
GE	1690	891	52.7	2841	1624	57.1
GR	3.519	1292	36.7	6821	5046	73.9
IR	9.563	2217	23.1	6869	2602	37.8
IT	606	329	54.2	1046	645	61.6
LU	130	89	68.4	262	176	67.1
NE	354	210	59.3	408	245	60.0
PO	236	134	56.7	586	313	53.4
SP	694	371	53.4	1297	788	60.7
SW	271	128	47.2	1606	936	58.2
<b>EU Total</b>	<b>18751</b>	<b>5559</b>	<b>29.6</b>	<b>26445</b>	<b>15339</b>	<b>58.0</b>
<b>UK</b>	<b>365323</b>	<b>251160</b>	<b>68.7</b>	<b>388691</b>	<b>303065</b>	<b>77.9</b>

Source: UCAS

The highest proportion of accepted students was Belgian students (69.8%), followed by Luxembourg domiciled students (68.4%), Dutch (59.3%), Finnish (58.4%), and Portuguese students (56.7%).

A rather different picture emerges when proportions of accepted students by EU country of domicile in 1999 were examined. The highest proportion of accepted students was of Greek domicile (73.9%) followed by Belgian students (70.4%), Luxembourg (67.1%), and Danish

students (65.2%). The lowest proportion of accepted students in 1999 was again Irish domicile students (37.8%)<sup>3</sup>.

## Conclusions

This chapter has sought to give an overview of student mobility flows in European Union countries and EU student flows towards the UK. Data analysed suggest that although student mobility in the EU remains a rather marginal phenomenon, it has increased remarkably in absolute terms in the last two decades. Some indications exist that students studying abroad for a degree or for a period of study as a proportion of all students in EU higher education, is on the increase. It has also been found that there is in the EU a high level of regionalisation of mobile student flows, as well as a growing change of flows direction towards the UK.

Data examined also suggest that flows of mobile students vary considerably across EU countries. The number of students studying in an EU country other than their own, as a proportion of students studying at home, vary across EU countries. Luxembourg has the highest proportion of students studying in another EU country. Large proportions of Greek and Irish students were studying in another EU country, while the UK has the lowest proportion of outgoing students.

Differences in student flows across EU countries were also found with respect to i) destination countries, and ii) incoming/outgoing student ratio. The most popular destination country among EU students studying in another EU country in 1996/97 was, by far, the UK. Other popular destination countries were Germany, France, and Belgium. The number of EU students studying in the UK has increased dramatically since 1979/1980. The UK was (in 1996/97) the most popular destination country among students studying abroad from eight EU

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<sup>3</sup> No research appears, however, to have thoroughly investigated the factors accounting for such differences and changes over time. Such research, focusing on the institutional and departmental levels, may examine practices and perceptions held at those levels and, particularly, the effects of the expansion of the UK higher education system since late 1980s, the competitive funding mechanisms on admissions criteria and standards in the hierarchical UK higher education system, and the role of perceptions and accumulated experiences of institutional actors involved in student selections.

countries (Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Spain, and Sweden). The UK was in mid-1990s by far the largest net 'importer' country of EU students. Other major net importer countries were Germany, Belgium, and Austria. South European countries (notably Greece), Scandinavian (Sweden, Finland, Denmark) countries, Ireland, Netherlands and Luxembourg were net 'exporter' countries.

The UK was also the most popular destination country among students studying in another EU country within EU funded mobility programmes, and particularly within ERASMUS. The most frequent subjects studied abroad by ERASMUS and LINGUA students, in the period 1987/88, were business studies, languages and philological studies, engineering, and social sciences.

This chapter has also examined the patterns and characteristics of EU students studying in the UK, as well as the demand for study at an undergraduate level in the UK. The main findings were: among EU domiciled students studying in UK universities males were slightly more than females. About half of EU students were studying for a first degree in the UK. Differences were found across subjects EU student study in the UK with higher proportions studying 'business and administrative studies', 'engineering and technology', 'combined subjects', 'languages', and 'social, economic, and political studies'.

Applications for study at undergraduate level in the UK increased rapidly (41%) in the period 1994-1999 with an annual rate of increase of 8,2%. In that period, applications of students from all EU countries were increased with the exception of Irish students. Those mostly increased were Finnish, Swedish, Austrian, French, and Portuguese students. Greek and Irish domiciled students represented, in 1999, over half of applications for undergraduate courses in the UK. The most popular subject among EU applicants to study at an undergraduate level in the UK, throughout the period 1994-1999, was business and administrative studies. Other popular subjects were, in 1999, creative arts, social studies, and engineering and technology. The demand for study in the UK, in the period 1994-1999, increased more in creative arts, mass communications and documentation, science combined with arts, and mathematical sciences and informatics.

This chapter has also sought to explore whether there exist underlying factors explaining incoming and outgoing flows of student mobility across EU countries. No such clear patterns have been possible to identify with probable exception Scandinavian countries. Lower economic development and per capita income levels, for example, seem to indicate some similarities between Greece and Ireland. Such similarities were more evident in the high proportion of outgoing degree students and the temporal effect of the introduction of fees in the UK on flows of students from those countries. A firm conclusion cannot, however, be drawn as no similarities were found with other less developed EU countries and, particularly, Portugal and Spain. It must, however, be noted that in Portugal, another less developed EU country, there exist private higher education institutions, able to meet student demand for higher education study at home, that may affect outgoing student flows. On the other hand, levels of economic development do not seem to explain incoming student flows as only three of the most developed EU countries (France, Germany and particularly the UK) attract the vast majority of EU mobile students. Moreover, Greece and Portugal rank low as destination countries of mobile students but this is less so in the case of Spain and Ireland, particularly among students studying abroad for a period of study. Similarly, no country (and population) size effect in mobility flows was identified as larger countries such as Germany or France do not have larger numbers of students abroad than smaller countries such as Ireland and Greece, while the UK has less students abroad than smaller and larger countries.

These findings rather support the argument that for a better understanding of student mobility, and higher education internationalisation in the EU, research should better focus on mobile students from different EU countries and the social factors influencing their motives and educational choices. Such a focus on mobile students and in a comparative perspective across EU countries is expected to provide a better understanding of the social dynamics of student mobility and flow patterns in the EU.

Therefore, in the following chapters, the choice of students from EU countries (with the exception of UK students) to study in a country other than their own is examined. Such an investigation aims to provide a theoretically informed empirical understanding of the growing phenomenon of student mobility, the internationalisation of higher level learning processes and of the student population in EU higher education systems and institutions. It also aims to

identify social factors that may account for asymmetries in student flows across countries and subjects.

To this end, the case of EU students in UK universities has been selected. This choice was made as the UK is currently the most popular destination country among EU mobile students and among top destination countries at a global level. As it has also emerged in this chapter, the UK is the most popular destination among other mobile groups in higher education (i.e. young researchers). Therefore, in the following chapters the factors influencing the choice of the UK as the place to study abroad is also examined. In this investigation, distinction is made between students choosing to study abroad with the view to obtain a degree and those studying for a period of study (mainly within an ERASMUS student exchange scheme or under another arrangement) allowing for variation in the reasons underpinning such choices and reflecting the different processes students go through in their choices.

Before, however, investigating the social factors influencing student choices, the actions of macro and meso levels actors (European, national, institutional) are examined (Chapter Four), that develop policies and regulations and shape the context of opportunities, limits, and constraints set to students. The extent that such policies and regulations can interpret flows and patterns of student mobility in the EU is also examined.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Macro and meso level actors, student mobility, and the structuration of the European educational space**

#### **Introduction**

The notion underpinning this research is that student mobility, the structuration of the European educational space, and European social integration are multi-actor social processes. This chapter focuses on macro and meso level actors acting at superordinate levels and examines the opportunities and limits they set for social games to be played by subordinate actors. Macro level actors act at the European and national level while meso level actors include mainly higher education institutions and departments. Such actions include mainly the development of legal, administrative, and policy social structures within which student mobility in the EU takes place. More emphasis is given on the EU and the UK context, reflecting the overall objectives of this research.

#### **1 The EU level**

From the perspective of system integration, i.e. the institutional relationships between national and European institutions, educational systems lie under the control of the nation-state. European level actors have rather limited competencies to act in the education domain. In the Treaty establishing the European Community (Treaty of Rome) education was not included in the policy areas under EC competence. EU institutions, however, through a gradual process have expanded their competencies and have become involved in the policy areas of education and vocational training. This process was reflected in the Treaty of Maastricht and the inclusion of articles 127 and 128 referring to the role of EU institutions in the areas of education and vocational training respectively<sup>1</sup>. According to those legal provisions EU

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<sup>1</sup> With the adoption of the Treaty of Amsterdam, these articles were renumbered as 148 and 149 respectively.

competencies and actions in education are restricted by the principle of subsidiarity and the role of EU level actors is limited to promote cooperation and supplement national level institutions which have full control over the content and organisation of their educational systems. Although EU institutions have been assigned the right to issue Recommendations or resolutions ('soft' legal instruments) they are not binding and their implementation lies with national institutions. Within such limited competences and resources, EU institutions have been assigned the role to promote the 'European Dimension' in all levels of education mainly through the development and the implementation of policy programmes. Such policy programmes support co-operative activities of educational institutions with a European dimension, also including short-term mobility of students.

As Corbett (2002) has shown the development of the EU policy in education has been the outcome of actions mainly developed by actors acting within EU institutions, and particularly the European Commission. Such actors have developed strategies<sup>2</sup>, skilfully exploiting opportunities and institutional resources at their disposal, and acting as policy entrepreneurs (Cram, 1997) have expanded EU competences over a policy domain initially reserved under exclusive national control. Such EU actors have thus expanded the political capital of European institutions i.e. the European involvement in, and influence of nationally controlled educational systems. Interestingly, Corbett seeking to explain why those actors have acted in such a way refers also to their 'biographies' (as forms of socialisation) with pro-European ideas.

The concrete outcome of actions of EU level actors in the field of education include mainly the development of policy programmes. The ERASMUS programme (launched in 1987) adopted a co-operative approach and aimed at promoting co-operation activities between EU higher education institutions and student (and staff) mobility across the EU, within exchange agreements. LINGUA (launched in 1989) promoted foreign language learning and the mobility of language students (and teachers) within the EU. COMETT supported the international co-operation between higher education institutions and industry. TEMPUS was the EU programme

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<sup>2</sup> For a detailed description of such strategies and the history of the evolution of the EU educational policy, see also Lenarduzzi (2003).

supporting co-operation activities with higher education institutions from Central and Eastern European countries. Since mid-1990s EU activities in education and vocational training were included in the SOCRATES and LEONARDO DA VINCI programmes, respectively. In the framework of these EU policy programmes support is provided to students to study in another EU country for a period of three to nine months.

EU policy programmes in education, provide incentives to educational institutions, and individuals (e.g. teaching staff, students, <sup>3</sup> etc.) to develop and participate, on a voluntary basis, in cross-border cooperation activities. That is, meeting the policy objectives set and expanding the European and international activities of higher education systems, EU policies, instead of an authoritative intervention through regulations, have employed a bottom-up approach, largely relying on the response of European higher education institutions, departments, staff, and students.

The EU policy model for short-term mobility of students relies on the cooperation between higher education institutions as opposed to their competition for students. The quantitative policy objective set in 1987 (with the launch of the ERASMUS programme) by the European Commission and the European Parliament, to be achieved by 1992, was 10% of the EU student population spending a period of study abroad<sup>4</sup>. In this non-competitive model the number of students exchanged were designed to be equal between cooperating higher education institutions, balancing costs and benefits across participating countries and institutions. It must be noted that at the EU level no support is provided to students to study for a full degree abroad at undergraduate level. Postgraduate study abroad is, however, supported within the framework of European Masters of the SOCRATES programme. Support is also

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<sup>3</sup> EU level financial support provided to students studying abroad within ERASMUS is meant to cover only additional expenses of students estimated to be caused by mobility, and are generally considered to be low. National authorities may, however, provide students additional grants for their study abroad.

<sup>4</sup> As, however, estimated by the SOCRATES programme (1995-1999) evaluation, the participation rate in ERASMUS student mobility over the course of study was 5%, that is, about half the target envisaged, over a decade before.



provided to doctorate students and young researchers wishing to undertake research in another EU country, as part of the EU research policy.<sup>5</sup>

Since 1995, with the introduction of the 'institutional contract' within ERASMUS, higher education institutions were asked to apply to the EU Commission for support of their international co-operation activities, and formulate a European policy statement<sup>6</sup>. The institutional contract seems to have enhanced the systemic integration of EU higher education institutions within a multi-level policy and regulatory context. Within this multi-level context higher education institutions have been provided with an institutional framework structuring European co-operation, as well as an additional source of funding for European and international activities of higher education institutions. This multi-level context has been further enhanced and supplemented with the development of the EU research policy. EU higher education institutions have found institutional and financial opportunities and support to develop, in a collaborative way, their research activities, increasing the internationalisation, or for that matter, Europeanisation of their research activities and function.

The EU has also developed policy programmes, supporting international activities (also including mobility of students) of higher education institutions, not only within the European region but also between EU institutions and third countries such as the US, Canada, Asia, China, India, Arab, Latin America, Mediterranean countries, Australia and Japan<sup>7</sup>. As a recent review of such EU policies noted most of such cooperation programmes have started in the last decade, cover most world regions and countries, have a higher education focus, but are still modest when compared with EU expenditure for intra-European cooperation (Reichart & Wächter, 2000, p. 6-7). In 2003 a new programme was adopted at the EU level (ERASMUS MUNDUS) aimed at attracting students (and scholars) from outside Europe to study at postgraduate level

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<sup>5</sup> Such support was initially provided within the framework of the Human Capital and Mobility Programme, subsequently within the Training and Mobility of Researchers Programme, and currently the Host Fellowships programme.

<sup>6</sup> For an analysis of the effects of the introduction of the 'institutional contract' in higher education institutions' policy and practice and the development of their international and European strategies see Barblan et al (1998).

<sup>7</sup> For a complete inventory of such policy programmes see Reichart & Wächter, 2000.

in at least two European countries. Such policies that seek to increase the EU share of international student mobility, can be seen as European strategies and actions aiming at increasing Europe's economic and cultural capital in a global context. Economic capital is associated with the economic benefits mobile students accrue in host countries (also including 'brain drain'). Cultural capital is associated with the cultural influence of Europe in the world. Such actions and strategies can also be seen as resulting of the increasing competition among major actors (e.g. EU, USA) within a changing context of globalising economies and societies.

The rationales underpinning EU policies in education in general, higher education and student mobility, in particular, are mainly political/ideological, economic, and cultural, with shifting emphasis over the years. These rationales were already reflected in the policy objectives set for the ERASMUS programme adopted in 1987. Specifically, the objectives of the ERASMUS programme also included the following: to achieve a significant increase of mobile student numbers *'in order that the Community may draw upon an adequate pool of manpower with first hand experience of economic and social aspects of other Member States'...**'to strengthen the interaction between citizens in different Member States with a view to consolidating the concept of a People's Europe'*, and *'to ensure the development of a pool of graduates with direct experience of intra-Community cooperation, thereby creating the basis upon which intensified cooperation in the economic and social sectors can develop at Community level'*.<sup>8</sup>

The political/ideological rationale refers to the promotion of European identity and citizenship, and a growing sense of belonging to a wider community, to be achieved through increased social interaction and exchange of social elite group of people, such as students studying at higher level. Such state-building rationales may be best interpreted as ways of supporting the political and social legitimacy of the European integration process and the enhancement of pro-European attitudes. The economic rationale has two dimensions: First, it refers to the social and educational prerequisites for the successful operation of a European labour market, including mainly the

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<sup>8</sup> See Article 2, of the Council Decision of 15 June 1987 adopting the European Community action scheme for the mobility of university students (87/327/EEC), in Council of the European Communities (1988).

acquisition of direct knowledge of other European countries, intercultural experience, and the development of foreign language and cross-cultural communication skills (human capital development)<sup>9</sup>. The development of a European labour market is approached as contributing to the competitiveness of European economies in the global context and enhancing social cohesion within and between European societies; Second, it refers to the increase of the EU share of the international student mobility in the global student market and trade of educational services. This rationale is more evident in the policy objective set by the European Council in Barcelona<sup>10</sup>, for European higher education institutions to become a '*world reference by 2010*', and the recently adopted programme ERASMUS-MUNDUS.

In 1980s the political/ideological rationale was assigned more emphasis, accompanying a broader pro-European rhetoric and the acceleration of the European integration process<sup>11</sup>. The economic rationale has been more emphasised in the 1990s, forming part of the wider policy objective set at the EU level to establish knowledge-based economies and learning societies<sup>12</sup>. This rationale has, recently, been placed more at the forefront of EU policies as the Lisbon European Council (March 2000) has set the objective for the EU to become '*the most competitive and dynamic knowledge based economy in the world*' by 2010. Among the policy measures to achieve this overarching policy objective a new policy instrument has been employed at the EU level, the open method of co-ordination<sup>13</sup>, while EU governments have agreed to promote the convergence of education systems towards shared goals by

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<sup>9</sup> See also the section on the European Community Dimension in European Commission (1991) Memorandum on Higher Education in the European Community, pp. 28-43.

<sup>10</sup> See Presidency Conclusions Barcelona European Council, 15-16 March 2002.

<sup>11</sup> With the adoption of the Single European Act (1987), the integration of the Internal Market Programme by 1992, and the signing of the Maastricht Treaty (1992).

<sup>12</sup> See CEC (1996)

<sup>13</sup> The actual impact of the open method of co-ordination as an EU level policy instrument on national educational policies and practices remains to be seen. This instrument, however, is expected to increase the comparability and transparency of the nationally controlled and regulated education systems, thus facilitating public pressure for policy reforms as well as pressure by EU institutions or other stakeholders acting at the national and European levels.

2010. Among the goals to be achieved by 2010, increase of mobile student numbers is also included<sup>14</sup>.

From the perspective of systemic integration an EU legal framework has also been gradually developed affecting student mobility across EU member countries and particularly their right to access higher education systems, reside in another EU country, and the formal recognition of studies taken in another EU country. In particular, as a result of the ECJ judgements in the *Gravier*, *Blaizot*, *Comett* and *Erasmus* cases there is a legal requirement that students who are EU nationals must be treated equally to nationals regarding access to higher education courses in EU higher education institutions. The right of equal access does not, however, also include equal conditions in the participation to those courses (e.g. grants, loans). Moreover, EU students (and their spouses) have the right to reside in another EU country for the duration of their study, subject to certain conditions, mainly including that they will not become a burden of the social security system of the host EU country. Therefore, prior to the beginning of their course, students may be asked to assure that they have the financial means to study their course<sup>15</sup>.

Higher education studies, taken in an EU country, are recognised throughout the EU for professional purposes. Professional recognition of studies in regulated professions (medical professions, engineering, architecture, law) are ruled by sectoral directives issued and are based on the comparability and harmonisation of training courses. An EU Directive, introducing a general system of professional recognition for higher education studies was also adopted (in 1988) by EU institutions<sup>16</sup>. The central idea of the general system is that a national of an EU member state holding a qualification obtained after at least three years of study in a member state higher education institution is, in principle, qualified to take up this profession in any EU country. In cases where wide differences in training courses are found compensation mechanisms

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<sup>14</sup> See CEC, (2002)

<sup>15</sup> For legal approaches and discussions of EU educational law see J. De Groof (1994). For a short overview of the development of EU educational law see M. Verbruggen (1994). See also Lonbay, J. (1989) and B. De Witte, (1989).

<sup>16</sup> Directive EEC/88/48.

may apply including evidence of professional experience, adaptation period, or aptitude tests.

Academic recognition (i.e. recognition in order to pursue studies in another EU country) has not as yet been subject to EU regulations. There is, however, a requirement that periods of study abroad taken within the ERASMUS student exchange programme are recognised by co-operating institutions. This is supported by the introduction of a European Credit Transfer System for the recognition of period of studies abroad. Academic recognition of qualifications across EU countries is, supported by non-binding conventions<sup>17</sup> adopted by international organisations such as UNESCO and the Council of Europe and policy initiatives such as the 'Diploma Supplement' (in cooperation with the EU) and the establishment and operation of NARIC, a network of national centres for academic recognition of studies.

## **2 The Bologna process**

In the European region national governments of 29 EU and non-EU member states have recently launched an intergovernmental process (called the Bologna process) with the view to coordinate national policies so as to create a 'European higher education area'. The main objectives of the Bologna process include the promotion of student and staff mobility within the EU, and the attractiveness of EU systems at a global level. To this end, national governments have agreed to further promote student and staff mobility, to harmonise structures of higher education qualifications, to develop joint degrees, to facilitate recognition of degrees, and study periods abroad, to generalise the use of ECTS-compatible credit systems, and to give a European dimension in quality assurance in higher education<sup>18</sup>. The Bologna process has instigated policy debate throughout Europe and policy changes and reforms are being introduced.<sup>19</sup> The European national governments' preference of an

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<sup>17</sup>For details see Council of Europe 1995, and 1996.

<sup>18</sup>For the full text of the 'Bologna Declaration' see Joint Declaration of the European Ministers of Education convened in Bologna on the 19th of June 1999 (<http://unige.ch/cre/activities/bolognaforum>).

<sup>19</sup> For a review of changes and reforms in European higher education systems related to the objectives of the Bologna process see Haug & Tauch (2001).

intergovernmental cooperation process (outside the European Union institutions and policy-making processes) must be interpreted as an effort to maintain the national political capital over higher education systems. It remains, however, to be assessed to what extent, the intergovernmental approach is a more effective method in achieving more harmonised structures across EU countries. It also remains to be seen how such changes, smoothing out the diversity of higher education structures are going to affect student mobility particularly within the EU.

### **3 The national level**

The power over education systems in the EU lies predominantly with national state institutions. Actors acting at the national level are, therefore, powerful macro actors influencing the construction of the European educational space, and student mobility. Such macro actors develop strategies providing opportunities or setting limits to national and non-national students in their educational choices. Mobility of students and wider policies for the internationalisation of higher education systems have gained increasing attention at the national level, over the last two decades. In most countries receiving large numbers of foreign students, flows of foreign students have attracted the attention of national policy in the 1970s, in a background of rather rapidly increasing numbers of students studying in a country other than their own. Woodhall (1987) reviewing government policy in that period in a large number of (EU and non-EU) countries concluded that 'several countries, including Australia, and Canada, as well as Britain, introduced differential fees for overseas students while other countries use quotas to regulate or restrict foreign student numbers' (p.13). This was mainly a policy response seeking to reduce the costs of education of non-national students, in a background of growing numbers of students seeking to study abroad. Smith (1981) reviewing policy developments on student mobility in European countries in the early 1980s also noted the reluctance of national governments to implement policies encouraging student mobility, especially for the full duration of a course, and particularly of countries receiving large numbers of students. On the contrary, Smith noted that national governments were less reluctant to support short-

term mobility of students and periods of study abroad, particularly, if balance of incoming-outgoing flows of students were to be ensured.<sup>20</sup>

More recent reviews of national policies for the internationalisation of higher education, and mobility of students in the EU, however, have noted changes in such policies and have stressed their variation across EU countries. Such policy developments may be best understood within the changing context of growing international interdependence, and competition brought about by processes of European integration and globalisation. In this competitive and interdependent context national actors (nation-states) develop strategies and actions aimed at increasing their economic, cultural, and political capital associated with incoming and outgoing mobility of students. Such strategies of national macro level actors, acting at superordinate levels, set limits or provide opportunities to subordinate actors (e.g. higher education institutions, departments, staff, and students) involved in lower level social games.

The changing international context brought about by processes of globalisation and European integration, appears to open opportunities for re-negotiation of international hierarchies based on national power and status. National strategies can, therefore, be seen as national efforts to maintain or improve the power and status position of nations in a more fluid international competitive context. Differences in such national strategies across countries can, therefore, be broadly interpreted with reference to the relative power position of countries (nation-states), in the international hierarchy of countries, nation states, and national cultures. Such national differences can also be associated with national cultural traditions, taken as forms of prior socialisation and cultural dispositions. Such collective cultural dispositions are, for example, reflected in the treatment of education in most European countries as a 'public good' and state (as opposed to market) responsibility, provided to their nationals for free, and the opposition of such countries to 'marketisation' of education. In such countries (e.g. France, Germany, Greece) national strategies for internationalisation and student mobility, although opposing 'marketisation' of their

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<sup>20</sup> Germany, for example, had already established DAAD supporting German outgoing mobility of students and scholars.

own higher education systems within their national social context, involve the promotion of their national state-controlled higher education institutions in the global 'market' of students. Differences in national strategies in terms of target countries or regions of international students can be also associated, not only with broader national economic and political strategies but also with the international hierarchy of higher education systems, and cultures.

In particular, Adia et. al. reviewing national policies (Sweden, Spain, France, Germany, Ireland, UK) in early 1990s, and examining the potential for an 'open market' of students in the EU concluded that 'the higher education systems of Europe remain national entities, largely organised to cater for national demand and future national labour market needs. As a result, any mass influx of incoming students on a non-reciprocal basis resulting in the exclusion of national applicants from higher education is generally deemed undesirable. The negative financial implications of non-reciprocal incoming mobility means relatively few governments have explicitly linked funding to stimulate incoming student mobility.' (1994:81-82). Exception to this general trend, Adia et al. concluded, was Sweden where as a result of the state steering model of higher education institutions and an association between funding, and quality evaluation mechanisms, 'institutions have adopted a favourable policy towards student mobility' (1994:82).

Adia et al, however, have also emphasised the role played by national steering models of higher education, funding mechanisms employed, particularly in cases where institutional funding is directly linked to student numbers, providing institutions with incentives to actively seek students from the national, European or international market. In those cases, however, institutions only opt for European or other international students if they cannot meet their recruitment targets with national students (because, for example, of system expansion policies) or if international students are 'better' in terms of the admissions criteria set, and institutions are ready to offset their national loyalty. It can, therefore, be argued that self-organised mobility of students may - in some countries - be encouraged and facilitated not necessarily as a result of a direct national policy objective, and coherent strategy developed, but more as an indirect effect of the actual functioning of regulatory systems and funding mechanisms of higher education systems.



The growing attention of national level actors on higher education internationalisation and student mobility, as well as variation in national policies and strategies, across European countries, have been noted by the Kälvermark (1997) review of national policies. This study concluded that variation pertains across EU countries in relation to the rationales (economic, political, educational, cultural) underpinning national policies, their priorities i.e. target regions, target institutions and groups within the country, policy coherence, subject areas and types of activities. It is interesting to note that - as the review found - student mobility is included in the priorities of all national policies in the countries examined while foreign student recruitment is a priority only in Germany, Netherlands, UK and Central and Eastern Europe, and Russia<sup>21</sup>.

The ADMIT project has also ascertained the growing policy interest, and similarities as well as variation across different EU countries concerning higher education internationalisation and student mobility policies. Specifically, ADMIT argued (ADMIT, 2001) that variation at the national level relates mainly to admissions requirements and mechanisms used to control student numbers, level of responsibility for admissions (university or national level), and fees.

ADMIT also argued that 'there is a continuum in terms of national policy relating to student mobility, ranging from a focus on inward to a focus on outward mobility' in the countries examined (UK, France, Germany, Sweden, and Greece). In particular it was found that 'policy in both France and the UK is focused on inward mobility, especially of non-EU students. Both are marketing their higher education systems in a global context and the strategies adopted appear similar in terms of collaboration between key Ministries. Their reasons appear to be broadly similar and designed to maximise economic, political and cultural influence<sup>22</sup>. In Germany, there are also elements of this approach, but outward mobility of Germans is also promoted. In Sweden, policy focuses on both outward and inward student mobility....Greece at the

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<sup>21</sup> The growing policy interest on higher education internationalisation and student mobility was also observed in the national responses to the European Commission Memorandum on Higher education (CEC, 1991, for summaries of those reports see CEC, 1993), For an analysis of those responses see Smith et. al. (1993).

<sup>22</sup> For a more detailed comparison of the French and British policy for student mobility see Vaniscotte, F., West, A., Houguenague, A., Dimitropoulos, Murphy-Lejeune, E., A., Stokes E., (2003).

other end of the spectrum, has a long history of outwardly mobile students....Moreover, Greek policy focuses mainly on the mobility of Greeks living abroad and aims to facilitate their return to the country of origin by providing special admissions processes<sup>23</sup> (p. 4). With respect to the French and UK policy the ADMIT project noted the growing emphasis on the recruitment of international students from non-EU countries. This emphasis was evident in the 'Welcome to the UK' information and marketing campaigns (launched in 1999), the EduFrance initiative in France, and similar promotion strategies in Germany.

In such changing context of growing policy interest, at national level, specific policy measures adopted include structural reforms of national education systems (e.g. improving foreign language learning at all levels of education, restructuring of higher level qualifications and their length) removing legal and administrative obstacles to mobility of students, and improving information for opportunities to study abroad for incoming or outgoing students, developing courses in foreign languages and particularly in English language. More proactive policy measures also include unilateral decisions and strategies, bilateral or multilateral agreements between national (or sub-national) authorities, with sometimes a regional focus, supporting study periods abroad, the development of joint degrees -awarded to students spending periods of study in cooperating institutions from different countries-, or making student grants transferable abroad. For example, NORDPLUS, is the Nordic programme supporting mobility of students in the Nordic countries. Nordic countries have also reached agreements facilitating admission of students from other Nordic countries. In Sweden, since 1989 students are allowed to transfer their grants or study loans abroad. In Portugal national grants are provided to students to study abroad at a research postgraduate level. In the Netherlands, the STIR programme was launched in 1988 aimed to increase the number of Dutch students studying abroad for a period.

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<sup>23</sup> More recent policy developments in Greece, however, suggest a change in Greek national policy. Specifically, the government in co-operation with certain (state controlled) universities has announced agreements with the French government and French universities for the development and operation of undergraduate and postgraduate 'joint degrees' involving exchanges of students. Similar agreements are planned with the German government and universities. In addition, current governmental plans include the founding of a state-controlled 'International University' aimed at attracting foreign students mainly from neighbouring countries of SE Europe and the Black Sea.

Mobility of students is also supported within agreements of bordering countries such as, for example, the agreement among Netherlands, the Flemish Community of Belgium, the German Länder of North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony and Bremen. More recent policy initiatives in this area include the 'Airbus universitaire' initiative between France and Germany, and the similar accord (2003) between the UK and French governments to jointly fund the establishment of the Transmanche University. Under this initiative funding will be provided jointly for activities and programmes linking the UK University of Kent with French universities at Lille, Boulogne, Calais, and Dunkerque, at undergraduate, postgraduate, and research levels<sup>24</sup>.

#### **4 The institutional level**

Higher education institutions are also important actors in the construction of the European educational space, and mobility of students. Higher education institutions can be seen as acting at a meso level as their actions and strategies can be restricted by superordinate -national and European level- actors. Despite differences across EU countries and systems from the perspective of system integration (i.e. relationships with the state, internal functional differentiation, degree of autonomy and centralisation over course development and admissions, etc.), higher education institutions develop strategies providing opportunities or setting limits to students in their educational choices, strategies, and actions. Higher education internationalisation and student mobility in the EU are processes, that rely on the responses, actions and strategies of higher education institutions to national, European or international policies but also on their autonomous actions within the regulatory and social contexts they operate. The example of the SOCRATES programme suggests that the response rate of European higher education institutions is high. In particular, in 1997/98 a total of 1600 eligible European higher education institutions applied for funding of their international activities (including mainly student and staff

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<sup>24</sup> For more detailed information on national policies, strategies, and reforms aimed at supporting the European and international dimension of higher education and student mobility see the National Dossiers of Education systems of the EURYDICE network ([www.eurydice.org](http://www.eurydice.org)) compiled under the responsibility of national authorities by national EURYDICE units and updated annually. For on-going changes, reforms and debates concerning issues related to the objectives of the Bologna process see national reports on the implementation of the Bologna process tabled in the last Berlin meeting of Education Ministers ([www.bologna-berlin2003.de](http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de))

exchanges)<sup>25</sup>. Barblan et al (1998) have analysed European policy statements of European universities in the context of the SOCRATES programmes and found differences among institutions within and across EU countries. Specifically, such differences concern mainly the degree of clarity, coherence, continuity of institutional goals and strategies for internationalisation, changes made, institutional commitment, and the patterns of international activities which institutions develop. This analysis does not, however, provide explanations about the social or institutional factors that influence such strategies and actions across EU countries, or within higher education systems and institutions and account for variation found.

The ADMIT project sought to shed some light on the institutional motives for participation in the SOCRATES programme and the development of student and staff mobility schemes as well as European and other international student recruitment institutional policies, strategies, and practices. ADMIT (2000b) showed that there is variation between and within national higher education systems and institutions with respect to their internationalisation activities, their participation in European programmes, and foreign student recruitment. These differences appear to relate to national contextual factors from the perspective of system as well as social integration. National contextual factors from the perspective of system integration refer to regulatory systems such as, for example, funding mechanisms, and degree of centralisation or autonomy over student admissions. National contextual factors from the perspective of social integration refer to the social stratification of higher education institutions, departments, and academic fields in the national and international hierarchy of systems and institutions, based on their social and academic status, prestige, and reputation.

In the UK 'marketised' case, attracting more European or other international students (e.g. developing exchange schemes or foreign student recruitment) appears to be a strategy aimed at increasing the economic capital of institutions, as a means to increase their cultural capital, i.e. their position in the hierarchy of institutions. As Adia et al. argue 'Undoubtedly, competition for national students combined with the

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<sup>25</sup> see Barblan, A. et al. (1998). For data and analysis of cooperation activities between higher education institutions from EU and Central-Eastern European Countries see also Kehm et al, 1997.

expansion in higher education, the existence of differential fee rates for EU and non-EU students and the higher costs of postgraduate courses are factors driving student mobility. At many institutions student mobility in one form or another is being driven by financial incentives and the need to be attractive in a highly competitive higher education market' (1994:78).

Case study UK institutions examined in the context of the ADMIT project also verified the role played by funding mechanisms of higher education institutions in institutional strategies and practices relating to student mobility. The ADMIT research also highlighted variation in such institutional strategies, related to the hierarchical status of UK higher institutions. Specifically, the ADMIT project concluded that 'it appears that the hierarchical nature of the UK higher education sector is a crucial factor in understanding universities' orientations to student mobility. Demand for places at a university (and whether the university meets its MASN<sup>26</sup>) is clearly central to understanding the significance of student mobility to different universities. In addition, exchange programmes such as Socrates are regarded by some as means of increasing their prestige and circumventing the national hierarchy'<sup>27</sup> (May 2000: 89)

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<sup>26</sup> Maximum Student Number, agreed by an institution and the UK Funding Councils.

<sup>27</sup> The effects of expansionary policy, using funding mechanisms and differential fee levels on higher education institutions in terms of student intake profile are also illustrated in the LSE case. As Dimitropoulos (1999) has shown in the period 1985-1998 the LSE has expanded from 4,575 students in 1985/86 (before the reform of higher education funding) to 7,159 students, an overall increase of 56.4%. Interestingly, however, the LSE evolved from an institution offering mainly undergraduate courses (in 1985/6) into an institution mainly attended by postgraduate students in 1998/9. Postgraduate students increased much more than those in undergraduate level courses with a total increase of 89% (from 2,054 to 3,884 postgraduate students) against only 37.8% (from 2,360 to 3,253 undergraduate students). Moreover, although the LSE has traditionally been an international institution, in terms of student intake profile, the number of overseas students that in 1985/6 represented 47% of the total student population, increased considerably to represent (in 1998/9) 61% of students. That is, the LSE has gradually evolved in a mainly international than national UK institution. Students from EU countries studying at the LSE in 1998/9 represented 31% of all international students, followed by Asian students with 28% and North American students with 19%. EU students increased most, from 475 in 1987 to 1432 in 1998, a total increase of about 200%, followed by Asian students that increased by 115% (from 600 in 1987 to 1286 in 1998) and North American students, increased by 24.8% (from 700 to 874). A two-thirds majority of EU students in 1998, was studying at the LSE at a postgraduate level and one third at undergraduate level (997 against 435 respectively). The most frequent EU countries of domicile of EU students at the LSE in 1998 were Germany (334 students), Greece (234), France (220), Italy (197), and Spain (92).

## 5 EU students and the UK policy

Foreign student flows became a matter for policy concern of the UK government in late 1970s in a background of rapid growth of student numbers studying in British universities, and a 'laissez faire' policy regime 'combined with indiscriminate subsidy' (Williams et al., 1986:1). Failing to control such growth with numerical quotas set at the institutional level, due mainly to institutional autonomy over admissions, the UK government introduced differential fees (at a rate meeting the so called full tuition costs) for overseas students to meet the increasing demand while reducing the cost of their education. Fees were gradually coupled with targeted subsidies, directed towards students from selected countries. In parallel, and as a result of a political agreement reached at the European Community level - that was subsequently endorsed by European Court of Justice judgements - students from European Community member countries were excluded from paying fees and were treated equally to home students. This UK government decision must be understood also in relation to relatively low proportion of European Community students studying, at the time, in British tertiary (further and higher) education (a total of 6,752 students, representing 8% of all international students in 1979/80).<sup>28</sup> Although the introduction of fees strongly affected the flows of non-EU overseas students in the UK in early 1980s, to recover after mid-1980s, the number of students from EU countries in UK universities has been constantly increasing dramatically. Remarkably, in the 1990s the number of EU students studying in UK universities was increasing at a rate higher even than UK national students<sup>29</sup>.

Moreover, in the second half of 1980s the UK entered a period of expansion of higher education. To meet this objective the instrument employed by the government was linking public funding to student numbers admitted while institutions were let free to charge fees for postgraduate courses. Such funding mechanisms provided UK higher education institutions with incentives to increase the number of students admitted, but also to develop post-graduate courses to increase institutional income.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> see Maxey (2000).

<sup>29</sup> see Chapter Three.

<sup>30</sup> For more details see Williams (1998).

Central to understanding current UK policy over EU students are the growing demand by EU students to study in the UK, the autonomy of higher education institutions over student admissions, the funding mechanisms and the differential fees arrangements - at undergraduate and postgraduate level and for home, EU, and other overseas students -, and the strategies and practices of higher education institutions in terms of student recruitment. Specifically, UK policy for student mobility has recently been summarised in the UK Government Response to the House of Commons Select Committee Report on Student Mobility where it is stated that:

'The Government considers that this in-flow has many positive advantages. It represents a vote of confidence in the quality of UK higher education, both by our own students and by others in the EU. It encourages the 'European Dimension' to develop in institutions and exposes those students who do not themselves travel to an international atmosphere. Finally, these students are not entitled to financial support towards their maintenance costs from the UK Government. Therefore, any money that they spend here contributes directly to the UK economy (and through taxation, to Government income).

The Government does not actively encourage individuals from the UK to study in another country for the whole of their higher education, nor would the Government wish to encourage active marketing of UK higher education to potential first degree students from elsewhere in the EU, although this is a matter for institutions. The position of full paying EU students on certain postgraduate courses is different and closer to that of students outside the EU. We remain committed to ensuring that we continue to fulfil our treaty obligations in the granting of access to UK higher education and in the changing of tuition fees. Finally, there is the growing group of students from outside the EU, who are designated as 'overseas' students. The Government unreservedly welcomes these students to the UK, for their contribution to academic life in our institutions and for their contribution to the internationalisation of UK higher education. It is however, reasonable to expect that students from outside the EU should be prepared to fund the full cost of their higher education, both tuition costs and living expenses. The Government encourages institutions in the responsible

and prudent marketing of higher education overseas, including to EU postgraduates, and recognises the valuable contribution that this makes to export earnings<sup>31</sup>.

Moreover, the UK policy faces an imbalance<sup>32</sup> of student flows within the SOCRATES-ERASMUS programme of about 2 incoming students from European institutions for 1 outgoing student from UK institutions. Therefore, to increase the number of outgoing students in 1998 the UK government waived fees for those students studying abroad within ERASMUS for a full academic year.

## **Conclusions**

This chapter has shown that the construction of the European educational space and student mobility is a growing process involving actions of actors acting at macro and meso levels and with unequal resources at their disposal in providing opportunities and setting limits to students in their educational choices. Such actions of superordinate actors can be seen as macro level social games aimed at increasing some form of capital (economic, political, cultural). In the changing and more fluid context brought about by globalisation and European integration such social games can also be seen as efforts for re-negotiation of existing international, European, and national hierarchies of power and status. The outcome of such on-going and growing actions is the creation of a new social structure -a multi level policy and institutional context- providing opportunities and setting limits to students from EU countries in their educational choices.

In this multi-level context of opportunities and constraints, at the EU level support is provided to students to study abroad for a period within exchange agreements between higher education institutions. At this level no support is provided to students seeking to study in another EU country with a view to obtain a degree, with the exception of doctoral students. At the national level, large variation pertains across

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<sup>31</sup> However, the recently announced British and French accord to establish the Transmanche University indicates some change in the UK governments' policy orientation towards outgoing mobility of British students.

<sup>32</sup> See UK SOCRATES ERASMUS Council, 7 Year Report, 1988-1995, p. 6.



countries in terms of opportunities or constraints set to EU students wishing to study abroad (in-coming or outgoing). Such differences in national strategies and actions can be associated with national cultural dispositions, and the power and status position of a country at the European and international level. Similar variation pertains within national higher education systems and across different institutions, departments and fields of study. Such differences across systems and institutions may be best interpreted with reference to their systemic and social integration, i.e. their relationship with national states and their position in the international and national hierarchy of systems, institutions, departments and fields of study.

A focus, however, on opportunities and limits set by powerful superordinate macro and meso level actors cannot fully explain the dynamics of student mobility in the EU and the construction of the European educational space. Comparing the multi-level policy context with the actual flows of student mobility in the EU (Chapter 3) we observe that:

1. Less than half of opportunities provided to students to study abroad for a period, within the European ERASMUS programme, are taken up (see Chapter Three). Despite the fact that student exchanges within ERASMUS were designed to be equal across participating institutions and countries a variable - and relatively stable - pattern of student flows has emerged. That is, although European and national actors have shown preference for a cooperative as opposed to competitive policy model for student mobility, market-like forces have emerged as a result of student preferences and choices.
2. Despite that EU level financial support provided to students to study abroad for a degree is minimal (and difficulties of formal recognition of studies are pertinent) the number of students studying in another EU country is growing.
3. The number of Greek and Irish students studying in another EU country (particularly the UK) has been growing rapidly with no support by their national authorities (e.g. transferable grants or loans).
4. The student demand for study (and students enrolled) in the UK with a view to obtain an undergraduate level degree is growing despite the fact this type of incoming student mobility is not encouraged by the UK government.

5. Not all higher education institutions and departments, developing student exchange schemes (within ERASMUS), manage to send or attract the number of students agreed.

6. In the UK stratified and 'marketised' system, despite growing student demand for study in the UK and their active marketing, some higher education institutions and departments remain under-subscribed in terms of their student recruitment targets.

Therefore, the view adopted in this research is that for a better understanding of student mobility, the internationalisation of European higher education institutions' student population, and European social integration must focus on mobile students and the factors influencing their educational choices. Such a focus, without underestimating the role played by superordinate actors and their actions, allows also for a better understanding and evaluation of their actual role in student mobility in the EU. The following chapters, focusing on students and their motives for studying abroad and for selecting the UK, seek to shed light on the social dynamics of student educational choices and student mobility in the EU.

## Chapter Five

### The research methodology

#### Introduction

The main objective set for this investigation was to contribute to our understanding of the dynamics of student mobility and the growing internationalisation process of higher education in the EU. Specifically, the project seeks to explore and compare the social factors influencing the choice of students from EU countries i) to study in a country other than their own, for a full course or for a period of study, and ii) to choose the UK as the place to study abroad. To meet the objectives set the project focused on students' motives, perceptions, and beliefs of study abroad and of study in the UK. As Mills points out '[r]ather than fixed elements in an individual, motives are the terms with which interpretation of conduct by social actors proceeds. This imputation and avowal of motives by actors are social phenomena to be explained.' (Mills 1963, p. 440). He also points out that 'motives vary in content and character with historical epochs and with societal structures' (ibid. p.452). Mills' points are methodologically crucial not only in guiding the collection of data but also in their interpretation <sup>1</sup>.

Therefore, this research focuses on the reasons given by EU students for choosing to study in a country other than their own and for choosing - in particular - the UK as the place to study abroad. The project was developed in a background of little research and, especially, theoretical development of the social dynamics of student mobility and higher education internationalisation in the EU. Therefore, an empirical exploratory approach to data collection and theory building was adopted. That is, in the analysis and interpretation of the findings on student motives, connections are made inductively, between student motives and underlying changing social and

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<sup>1</sup> (see also Fuller 2001, pp.241-242)

educational contexts in EU societies within which such motives are shaped, and educational choices are made.

## **1 Data collection tools**

It is often argued that qualitative approaches are more appropriate for in-depth analysis while quantitative methods provide a more standardised basis for analysis enabling more sound generalisations to be drawn. The data collection approach adopted in this research was to link both qualitative and quantitative methods<sup>2</sup>. This strategy was employed with the view to benefit from the strengths of both approaches. In particular, the project was initiated with in-depths interviews with students from EU countries, studying in UK higher education institutions. The findings of the qualitative analysis of interviews informed and guided the design of the questionnaire that was subsequently sent to a larger number of students. Finally, the analysis of quantitative data was further informed by the findings of qualitative analysis of interviews with students<sup>3</sup>.

### *Alternatives considered*

It must be noted that the researcher felt that to meet the project objectives it might have been better if data on student motives were collected either just before students arrive in the UK or upon arrival. Such an approach incurs the advantage that students would have more 'fresh' in their minds their perceptions, beliefs and reasons for choosing to study abroad and for selecting the UK. Approaching students from EU countries before their arrival was, however, impractical. Approaching students upon arrival was also practically difficult to achieve. The researcher also considered the alternative to focus only on students being on their first year of study in the UK. Carrying out this survey, however, relied heavily on the co-operation of UK universities. Therefore, this approach was not employed as it was felt that it would probably increase the workload of the universities in selecting the students to be

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<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of the methodological debate about qualitative and quantitative methods and ways of linking them see M. Miles, A.M. Huberman (1994) 'Qualitative Data Analysis', Sage, London, pp. 40-42.

<sup>3</sup> I am also indebted to Professor Georgia Kontogiannoulou-Polydorides, , Head of the Greek team of the ADMIT project for providing me with the transcripts of interviews with mobile students carried out in the context of the ADMIT project by the Greek research team.

approached. It was felt that for the universities to offer their co-operation and support the requirements should be as simple as possible.

## 2 Qualitative data

This section presents methods adopted in the collection of qualitative data and the main findings of the analysis of semi-structured interviews conducted with EU students studying in UK universities. The specific approach adopted in the collection and analysis of qualitative data was to search for as much as possible variation in reasons given by students for choosing to study in a country other than their own, and for selecting the UK as the place to study abroad. This approach was deemed appropriate, given the overall research design of the project. Standardised data on students' motives were to be collected with the use of a questionnaire.

### Research questions and methods

In searching for as much as possible variation in student reasons for studying abroad and selecting the UK, data collection commenced with *semi-structured interviews* with EU students studying in UK higher education institutions. Semi-structured interviews provided the necessary flexibility that was required in exploring, probing, and clarifying student's reasons, perceptions, and beliefs about their educational choices.

The interviews with students focused on the following main research questions: What reasons students from different EU countries may have for choosing to study abroad and not in their home country? What reasons students may have for selecting the UK as the place to study abroad? What are the benefits to students of study abroad and of studying in the UK in particular? Who/what influences these students in their choices? In addition, information was sought on social, demographic, and family characteristics of students. Students were also asked about their own (and their families') experiences of studying or living abroad, as well as the languages students command (for the interview schedule used see Appendix)

## Question techniques

Two question techniques used in the semi-structured interviews with students proved particularly useful. Students were, first, asked to give reasons that they thought other students from their own country might have for studying abroad (i.e. why students from your country choose to study abroad?). Students were subsequently asked to give their own reasons for choosing to study abroad, and in not their own home country, and for selecting the UK as the place to study abroad. This technique enabled students, first, to reflect on different reasons students may have, and compare their own reasons with those of other students, before they started reporting on their own reasons.

The second technique used in the interviews with students was to reverse the question. For example, after students had given their reasons for studying abroad, they were asked to reflect and report on what would have happened if they had not chosen to study in a country other their own. The reverse question technique proved very useful in 'extracting' different variables involved in the choices of students and particularly in identifying social factors that may 'push' (or 'force') students to study abroad.

## Sample

The collection of qualitative data aimed at identifying as much as possible variation in reasons given by students. Therefore, an effort was made to approach mobile students from different backgrounds and characteristics such as country of origin, type of study abroad (e.g. full course, period of study), sex, field and level of study. It must, however, be noted that not any other rigorous criteria were set in selecting students to be interviewed. Therefore, this sample must be best considered a 'sample of convenience'. Interviewees included students of two main groups of EU students studying in UK universities. The first group were students studying in the UK with a view to obtain a degree. Those interviewed were studying at different levels (i.e. first degree, Masters', postgraduate research degree), and fields of study (i.e. social studies, sciences).

The second group of EU students interviewed were studying in the UK for a study period. This group included mainly students studying in the UK within the framework of ERASMUS-SOCRATES or similar types of student mobility schemes. Such schemes normally involve some co-operation between the home and the host institution of the student. This category of students may also include students that study in the UK for a period of study but the study period is a self-organised process, that is, non inter-institutional co-operation between the home and the host institutions is involved. Such students are usually called visiting students.

A total of 26 students were interviewed. These included 14 students studying in the UK to obtain a degree and 12 students studying in the UK for a period of study (of which 10 were ERASMUS students and 2 were other visiting students). Of the latter group, 9 were interviewed together in a group (focus group)<sup>4</sup>. Degree students interviewed were studying at different levels. In particular, 12 students were studying at a postgraduate level (of which 4 were studying for a Masters degree and 8 were studying for a research degree). Of those postgraduate students 5 had also completed a lower level degree in the UK (first degree or Masters'). The EU countries of interviewees' origin were: Germany 7, Belgium 2, France 1, Sweden 2, Italy 4, Spain 2, Greece 6, and Portugal 2.

### *Findings of qualitative data analysis<sup>5</sup>*

Reasons for choosing to study abroad.

The data collected through interviews with EU students suggest that different reasons or combinations of reasons may account for students' choice to study abroad. It was also found that, although certain reasons were, frequently, repeated by different students, their importance and combination may vary for each student. Such reasons given by students for deciding to study in a country other than their own included:

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<sup>4</sup> I would like to thank Hannah Schnitzer, a German ERASMUS student for her kind offer and support in bringing together those students to be interviewed in her flat in Edinbourg.

<sup>5</sup> The findings of qualitative data analysis on student motives for studying abroad and for selecting the UK was presented by the researcher in the ADMIT project meeting in Munich (31 March-1 April, 2000). The variables identified and discussed there were rather warmly welcome by project partners.

1. difficulties students faced in accessing specific higher education institutions, preferred subjects, or higher education in general in their home country
2. perceptions and beliefs concerning higher quality of studies, international reputation, visibility, and recognition of studies, institutions, and qualifications obtained abroad than at home
3. perceptions concerning higher labour market value and improved career prospects of studies abroad
4. students' desire to improve foreign language competence, and hence their career prospects
5. qualitative characteristics of higher education systems e.g. length of courses, actual length of studies before completion, contact with academic staff, teaching and learning methods, learning infrastructure and facilities, orientation of courses
6. student's desire to get a different perspective on subject studied at home and experience different academic communities
7. gaining international social and cultural knowledge, experiences, and communication abroad
8. personal reasons e.g. gaining autonomy and independence from family, need for a life change, broadening horizons, connecting with personal relations - boyfriend/girlfriend/family members - abroad
9. exploring possibilities for studying for a higher level degree abroad
10. influence of parents, friends, or teachers at home
11. funding opportunities to study abroad
12. other broader i.e. not strictly educational, social reasons e.g. delaying military service, marriage, entry to the labour market, weather

Reasons given by students for selecting the UK as the place to study abroad included:

1. students' desire to improve their proficiency in English language, and hence their labour market prospects
2. English language was the only foreign language under students' command
3. English was the foreign language students had a better command of (and felt more confident to study in)
4. perceptions concerning labour market value of UK qualifications



5. perceptions concerning quality of studies, reputation, visibility, and recognition of UK institutions, qualifications, and specific academics.
6. increased choice of courses and institutions in the UK
7. qualitative characteristics of UK higher education institutions e.g. length of courses, contact with academic staff, the tutorial/seminar system, flexibility within courses/modules, empirical orientation of courses, easy access on and completion of courses, accessible information about courses, simple and fast admission processes, multi-national composition of UK student population
8. influence of family, friends, or former teachers
9. funding opportunities in the UK
10. personal (girlfriend/boyfriend) and family relations in the UK
13. prior living/studying experience in the UK
14. particular interest in British culture
15. cost of living/studying in the UK
16. geographic proximity to home country
17. friendliness of British people

On the basis of the above data obtained through interviews with students a questionnaire was designed to be sent to a larger number of students with predominantly closed questions.

### **3 Quantitative data**

#### **Questionnaire design**

The next step taken in the data collection process of this research was to design a questionnaire<sup>6</sup>. The questionnaire design and structure was informed and guided by the findings of the analysis of the interviews with students. It included predominantly closed questions. Student interviews suggested that the choice to study abroad and select the UK was often a complex and multi-faceted process also including consideration of countries other than home or the UK. The questionnaire, therefore, was structured along two sets/lists of reasons. First, students were asked to give their

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<sup>6</sup> The questionnaire was designed under close guidance and with the involvement of A. West, Coordinator of the ADMIT project.

reasons for choosing to study abroad and not in their home country. Students were, subsequently, asked to give their reasons for selecting the UK as the place to study abroad. Interviews with students also suggested that in the choice of students, many different factors (reasons) were involved with unequal importance to each student. Therefore, students were asked to rate the importance to them for each of their reasons.

It also emerged that the process students went through varied significantly between those studying in the UK for a period of study and those studying for a degree to be obtained from a UK institution. The choice of the former category of students takes place mostly within agreements between institutions in different countries (e.g. ERASMUS inter-institutional network agreements), for a shorter period of time, and not unusually it is an integral and compulsory part of their studies at home. Therefore, the questionnaire was divided and different sets of questions were addressed to the two groups of students, allowing for the different processes students had been through before found to study in the UK. Questions addressed to all students were also included seeking background information about students.

Students studying for a full course in the UK were given a list of 45 reasons for choosing to study in a country other than their own and 35 reasons for choosing the UK as the place to study abroad. Students were asked, for each one of the reasons, to rate the importance to them on a four point scale (1=not at all important, 2= of some importance, 3=important, 4=very important). (For a small number of questions students were also given the option 0=not relevant). Students were also given the option (with open-ended questions) to state any other reason they may had for choosing to study abroad and for selecting the UK. In addition, information was sought on students' personal and family experiences abroad, language competence, country of origin, age, main sources of finance of studies, parental education, and perceived socio-economic status.

#### Country of student origin

Interviews showed that some students were either of mixed-families background, and/or had dual nationalities or had long living experience in different countries. It

was, therefore, felt that to establish with certainty student's country of origin it was useful to ask students (when applicable) to state both nationalities, as well as the country they considered their home country. For the same reason, additional information of mother and father nationalities and country of residence were also sought.

#### Family socio-economic status of students

To establish the social background of students, the socio-economic status of their family was sought, as perceived by students, on a five-point scale (high - above average - average - below average - low). This approach was deemed necessary, as there appear not to exist yet a hierarchical European System of Classification of Occupations.

#### Parental education of students

To establish the level of cultural integration of students, and given the diversity of educational structures and systems across the EU countries, students were asked to state separately the highest level of both parents' education. As educational structures across EU countries vary and in the past varied probably much more, the options given were as follows: 1.primary education, 2.lower/compulsory secondary education, 3.upper/post-compulsory secondary education, 4.vocational education/training, 5.higher education (not postgraduate degree), 6 higher education (postgraduate degree).

#### Sampling of universities and students

There are 165 public-funded higher education institutions in the UK, 132 in England<sup>7</sup>, 13 in Wales, 18 in Scotland and 2 in Northern Ireland. The sampling of the EU students involved a two-stage process. In the first stage, universities were sampled as

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<sup>7</sup> University of London colleges that receive separate funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England are counted as separate institutions.

follows: The number of EU students studying (in 1998)<sup>8</sup> at each UK institution<sup>9</sup> was calculated<sup>10</sup>. A total of 70 institutions with less than 300 EU domiciled students were excluded at this stage as it was our intention to focus on larger, multi-faculty institutions with higher numbers of EU students and ensure representation of all types of mobility (full degree, period of study), fields and levels of study, and EU countries of origin. To give a UK-wide representation, the remaining 97 institutions were clustered according to country (England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland) and those within England were further clustered into those in London and those outside the London area (because of the high proportion of EU students studying in London-based institutions).

Within each geographical category, institutions were then again clustered as being 'old' or 'new' – new universities being those that were (in general) formerly polytechnics. This stratification was made to ensure a representation of old and new institutions across the whole of the UK. The total number of institutions to be surveyed was set at 52<sup>11</sup>. The number of institutions to be selected from each cluster was calculated in proportion to the total number of the 97 selected universities. Within the categories (strata) described, institutions were selected randomly<sup>12</sup> and in proportion to the number of EU students.

The second stage of sampling, involved selecting 50 students in each institution. Questionnaires were sent out to selected institutions. Institutions were asked to select a representative sample of students and were given detailed instructions to enable them to do this. Resource and time constraints did not allow for quality control of institutional practice at the level of institutions to be carried out.

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<sup>8</sup> HESA, 1998.

<sup>9</sup> The total number of higher education institutions in interim 1998 HESA statistics was 167: 132 in England, 20 in Scotland, 13 in Wales and 2 in Northern Ireland (excluding the Open University).

<sup>10</sup> Using 1998/99 interim HESA statistics.

<sup>11</sup> Around half of those institutions with over 300 students.

<sup>12</sup> using Minitab

## Response rates

The 52 institutions randomly selected were approached and their assistance was requested. One London-based new university and one old Scottish university that replied in time that they were not able to provide assistance, were randomly replaced. The only new university of Northern Ireland that was not able to provide assistance could not be replaced. Nine selected institutions, however, despite initial agreement to assist, were not able to send questionnaires out to students. Due to very late reply these institutions were not replaced. These were 6 new universities (4 of which were London based) and 3 old English universities. As a result, 42 institutions sent (50 each) questionnaires to EU students. These were 16 new and 26 old universities. Of which 6 were Scottish (4 old, 2 new) 3 Welsh (2 old, 1 new), 1 old Northern Irish university, 27 English universities (11 new, 16 old), and 6 London based (5 old and 1 new). The overall rate of response (after replacement) by institutions was 84% (42 out of 51). The rate of response of old universities approached was 93.10% (26 out of 29) while for new universities this rate was 68.18% (16 out of 22).

The questionnaires were sent to institutions in the first week of March 2000 and the deadline to students for returning the questionnaire was the 12th of May 2000. A total of 2100 (42x50) questionnaires were sent out to students and 527 questionnaires were returned. This makes a total rate of response of 25.09%. A range of different reasons may account for the student rate of response. A reminder letter was not possible to be sent to non-respondents as the questionnaires were not numbered to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of information sought. A reminder letter to all students was not considered as – it was felt - that the increase of the workload was very likely that it would reduce the rate of response of institutions. Incorrect addresses held by institutions and delays in sending the questionnaires out to students may have also played some role. Delays occurred within universities in sending the questionnaires out to students may have also allowed only a limited time to students, before they return the questionnaire (a deadline was included in the note to students that accompanied the questionnaire). This hypothesis is further supported by vast differences in student response rates across institutions. The highest rate of response by institution was 40% (20 questionnaires received out of 50 sent out) and the lower rate was 1% (2 out of 50). Another reason for this may well relate to different

curriculum structures in participating universities, i.e. semester or trimester, and the different study-load students faced at the time they received the questionnaire. The Easter (23 of April) break might have also affected students' overall rate of response, as some students move out of their places and university accommodation is used for other purposes. Moreover, student response rate varied significantly between students at old and new universities. In particular, student response rate at 'old' UK universities was 26,46% (344/1300) while for students at 'new' universities the rate was 20.6% (165/800). No other reason was possible to be established for that difference in the rate of response apart from differences in curriculum structures. The length of the questionnaire may also have affected the rate of student response.

Of the total 527 questionnaires returned 12 were taken out of the sample to be analysed. These were 9 questionnaires that stated all three categories of students origin (country of birth, nationality, and identified home country) a non EU country or nationality (3 were UK/British citizens, 2 were from Cyprus, 1 Norway, 1 Hungary, 1 Venezuela, 1 USA, 1 Gibraltar); 1 questionnaire of a French national student that stated 'settled in the UK since 1983' was also taken out; and 1 questionnaire that stated level of study (NVQ2, A level).

Therefore, the sample analysed although randomly selected may not necessarily be a representative sample of EU students studying in UK universities. Subsequent analysis and generalisations based on the sample of this research must bear in mind this limitation.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Results and analysis of quantitative data**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the results of the quantitative data analysis collected through the questionnaire used. The questionnaire was designed on the basis of findings of the qualitative analysis of interviews conducted with students from EU countries studying in UK universities. Results are presented in two sections. The first section includes a description of the sample and demographic characteristics of students. Distinction is made to the two groups of mobile students i.e. a) degree students and b) period of study abroad students. The second section presents, for each group of students, the results of statistical analysis of the two main research questions set for this investigation, namely, (i) the choice of EU students to study abroad, and (ii) the choice of the UK as the place to study abroad. For each set of questions asked, descriptive statistics are given<sup>1</sup>, followed by the results of exploratory Factor Analysis (PCA) and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA).

#### **1 Sample description**

This section presents the characteristics of students participating in the sample. Where possible, proportions of EU students studying in UK universities and their characteristic are given as found in HESA 1997/98 data (see Appendix 1). Although some changes between 1997/98 and 1999/2000 may have occurred in the composition of the total EU student population, it is reasonable to argue that such changes are

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<sup>1</sup> A first version of descriptive statistics (main demographic sample characteristics and frequencies of main reasons given by students) was presented in the context of the ADMIT project (ADMIT, Workpackage 3, 2000) with A. West, Coordinator of the ADMIT project. Descriptive statistics were also presented by A. West and A. Dimitropoulos at the European Conference on Educational Research (ECER, 2000) ADMIT project Workshop, 20-23 September 2000, Edinburg, Scotland.

rather minor. HESA 1997/98 data can, therefore, be used as a base for a broad comparison with students participating in the sample.

#### Type of study and sex

Of the total 511 respondents, 387 (75.7%) were studying for a degree to be obtained in the UK (degree students) and 124 (24.3%) for a period of study in the UK. Of those studying for a period in the UK, a large majority of 92 (81%) were studying within the framework of a SOCRATES-ERASMUS exchange agreement.

A small minority (6.3%) were studying for a period in the UK under another arrangement (i.e. joint degree, visiting students). HESA (1997/98) data found that the proportion of those classified as 'other undergraduate' (mainly including ERASMUS students) was 20.5% of all EU students studying in the UK.

Of all respondents 198 (38.8%) were males and 312 (61.2%) were females. Of all degree students 162 (42%) were males and 224 (58%) were females. Of all period of study abroad students 36 (29%) were males and 88 (71%) were females (see Table 6.1 below). In HESA (1997/98) data there were 49.4% female students and 50.6% male students. Of 'other undergraduate' students 60.9% were female and 39.1% were male students. Of degree students (first degree-postgraduate taught-postgraduate research) 49.9% were male and 50.0% were female students.

**Table 6.1 Students by type of study, and sex**

type of study	sex				Total	
	Males		females			
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Degree	42	162	58	224	75.7	386
period of study abroad	29	36	71	88	24.3	124
Total	100	198	100	312	100	510



## Level of study of degree students

Of degree students 206 (53.8%) were studying for a first degree in the UK (undergraduates), 106 (27.7%) were studying for a Masters' degree (MA, MSc), and 71 (18.5%) were studying for a research postgraduate degree (MPhil, PhD) (see Table 6.2 below). In HESA 1997/98 data of degree students 69% were studying for a first degree, 18% for a postgraduate taught degree, and 12.9% for a postgraduate research degree.

**Table 6.2 Level of study of degree students**

Level of study	%	N
Undergraduate	53.8%	206
postgraduate (MA, MSc)	27.7%	106
research postgraduate (MPhil, PhD)	18.5%	71
<i>Total</i>	100	382

## Country of student origin

To establish the country of student's origin information was sought on a range of different background variables. Details of the students' nationality (or nationalities in case of dual nationality), country of birth, and the country they considered to be their 'home country' were requested. Additional information on parents' country of residence, nationality and country of birth was also collected. The student's home country was taken as his or her country of origin if it matched his or her nationality, country of birth and country they considered as their home country. Where all-three criteria did not match (or were not given) additional information about parents' country of residence, birth and nationality were used to establish student country of origin. The results obtained are presented in Table 6.3 below: Among degree students the highest proportion were Greek students with 20.2% followed by German (with 14.7%), French (with 13.2%) and Irish students (with 12.1%). The lowest proportions were Luxembourgian students with 1.8%), Austrian (with 2.8%) and Swedish students (with 3.4%). Among period of study abroad students the highest proportion were French students with 25% followed by German students with 24.2%. The lowest

proportions were Portuguese students with 0.8% and Finish students with 3.2%. Noteworthy, no Irish or Luxembourgian students studying for a period in the UK participated in the sample. This may well be due to small numbers of those students in the total EU student population in UK universities.

**Table 6.3 EU country of student origin, by type of study**

<i>EU country of origin</i>	<b>degree</b>		<b>period of study abroad</b>		<b>Total</b>		<b>HESA 97/98 (%)</b>	
	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>total</i>	<i>other undergraduate</i>
<b>GE</b>	14.7	57	24.2	30	17	87	13.6	29.9
<b>GR</b>	20.2	78	4	5	16.2	83	26.7	4.4
<b>FR</b>	13.2	51	25	31	16	82	13.4	30.5
<b>IR</b>	12.1	47	-	-	9.2	47	16.6	22.8
<b>IT</b>	5.2	20	8.1	10	5.9	30	5.5	24.8
<b>SP</b>	4.7	18	8.1	10	5.5	28	7.5	32.6
<b>BE</b>	4.4	17	7.3	9	5.1	26	2.3	18.7
<b>DE</b>	4.4	17	5.6	7	4.7	24	1.8	20
<b>FI</b>	4.9	19	3.2	4	4.5	23	2.5	21.8
<b>NE</b>	3.9	15	4	5	3.9	20	2.9	18.5
<b>SW</b>	3.4	13	5.6	7	3.9	20	3.5	31.9
<b>PO</b>	4.4	17	0.8	1	3.5	18	2.1	11.3
<b>AU</b>	2.8	11	4	5	3.1	16	1.1	33.1
<b>LU</b>	1.8	7	-	-	1.4	7	0.5	3.3
<b>Total</b>	100	387	100	124	100	511	100	20.5

Table 6.23 also presents HESA 1997/98 data of EU students by country of domicile. It also includes proportions of students classified by HESA as 'other undergraduates' as a proportion of all students from each EU country of domicile. It appears that students from some countries and type of mobility (degree or period of study) are underrepresented in the sample. This is mostly the case of Greek and Irish students. Greek domicile students represented in 97/98 26.7% of the total EU population in UK universities (of which 4.4% were 'other undergraduate' students) against 16.2% of the sample. Irish domicile students represented 16.6% in 97/98 (22.8% 'other undergraduate') against 9.2% of the sample (0% 'other undergraduate'). Spanish domiciled students were also slightly underrepresented with 7.5% against 5.5%. It

may, therefore, be argued that as a result of the under-representation of Greek and Irish students other categories of students were over-represented in the sample.

#### Age of students

The mean age ( $\pm$ Standard Deviation) of students is given below in Table 6.4. The last category set was 33 years and outliers were grouped with it. The mean ( $\pm$ SD) age of all students was 23.8 ( $\pm$ 3.5). The mean age of degree students was 24.2 ( $\pm$ 3.8). The mean age of period of study abroad students was 22.9 ( $\pm$ 2.3). The mean age of students by level of study was: undergraduates 22.3 ( $\pm$ 3.0), postgraduate 25.8 ( $\pm$ 3.6), research postgraduate 27.3 ( $\pm$ 3.4).

**Table 6.4 Mean age and Std Deviation of students**

	Mean Age	Std. Deviation
<b>degree students</b>	24.2	3.8
undergraduate	22.3	3.0
postgraduate	25.8	3.6
research postgraduate	27.3	3.4
<b>period of study</b>	22.9	2.3
<b>all students</b>	23.8	3.5

Comparisons (with ANOVA) showed that mean differences of student age were significant when undergraduates were compared with postgraduate students ( $b=3.4$ ,  $p<0.000$ ) and research postgraduate students ( $b=4.9$ ,  $p<0.000$ ); Mean differences were significant when postgraduate students were compared with research postgraduate students ( $b=1.4$ ,  $p<0.000$ ). Mean differences were also significant when degree students were compared with period of study students ( $p<0.001$ ).

#### Subject studied

Classification of courses studied in the UK by degree students was guided by the courses classification system of HESA. Due to small number of participants in some

categories, however, courses were grouped under broader subject categories. The results obtained are presented below in Table 6.5. The most frequent subject studied by participants was 'social/economic and political studies' with 19.7%, followed by 'languages/humanities/arts' (with 14.9%) and 'business and administrative studies' (with 14.4%). Category 'other' includes mainly various combinations of subjects.

**Table 6.5 Degree students: subject group studied**

<i><b>Subject group</b></i>	<i><b>N</b></i>	<i><b>%</b></i>
Social/Economic/Political Studies	74	19.7
Languages/Humanities/Arts	56	14.9
Business Administration and Combined	54	14.4
Engineering/Technology/Architecture	50	13.3
Medicine/Allied Subjects	43	11.4
Physics/Maths/Computer Science	39	10.4
Law	17	4.5
Other	43	11.4
<i><b>Total</b></i>	<i><b>376</b></i>	<i><b>100</b></i>

Period of study abroad students were asked to give the title of their course at home country institution. Courses given and results obtain were grouped as follows (see Table 6.6): 'sciences' 33 (28%) 'social studies' 59 (50%), and 'languages/humanities/arts' 26 (22%).

**Table 6.6 Period of study students: subject group studied at home institution**

<i><b>Subject group</b></i>	<i><b>%</b></i>	<i><b>N</b></i>
Sciences	28	33
Social studies	50	59
Languages/Humanities/Arts	22	26
<i><b>Total</b></i>	<i><b>100</b></i>	<i><b>118</b></i>

## Family socio-economic status

As there is no hierarchical European classification system of occupations students, were asked to state themselves their family socio-economic status on a five level scale (high, above average, average, below average, low). Results on student perceived family socio-economic status are presented in Table 6.7 below. The majority of degree students (42%) stated that their family socio-economic status was 'above average' and of period of study students (41%) stated that their socio-economic status was 'average'. A small minority of students stated that their socio-economic status was 'below average or low' (4.9% of degree students and 7.4% of period of study students). Degree students had a lower mean with 2,36, ( $\pm 0.7$ ) than period of study students with 2.43 ( $\pm 0.8$ ) which indicates that degree students come may from slightly higher socio-economic family background than those studying abroad for a period. A T-test, however, comparing means found no significant difference among the two groups of students.

Moreover, the proportion of period of study abroad students that stated that their socio-economic status is 'high' and 'above average' is lower than that of degree students while those that stated 'below average' and 'low' is higher. This may suggest that degree students may be of slightly higher socio-economic status than period of study abroad students. This may be due to, and associated with, the costs of study abroad. Shorter-term mobility may be more accessible to students of lower socio-economic background.

**Table 6.7 Perceived family socio-economic status, by type of study abroad**

<i>socio-economic status</i>	<i>degree</i>		<i>period of study</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>
high	13.2	51	12.3	15	13	66
above average	42	162	39.3	48	41.3	210
average	39.9	154	41.0	50	40.2	204
below average-low	4.9	19	7.4	9	5.5	28
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>386</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>122</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>508</i>

### Mother's levels of education

The level of education of students' mothers is given below in Table 6.8. A majority of students stated that their mother had a higher level of education (27.8% of total) while almost one out of six (16.2% of total) stated that their mother had a postgraduate degree.

A small minority (7.6% of total) stated that their mother's level of education was 'primary education'. A T-test comparing means found no significant difference among the two groups of students.

**Table 6.8 Level of mother education, by type of study**

Level of education	degree		period of study		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
higher education (post graduate degree)	15.4	58	18.7	23	16.2	81
higher education (not postgraduate degree)	28.1	106	26.8	33	27.8	139
Vocational education/training	19.4	73	13.8	17	18	90
Upper/ post-compulsory secondary education	16.4	62	18.7	23	17	85
lower/compulsory secondary education	13.3	50	13.8	17	13.4	67
Primary education	7.4	28	8.1	10	7.6	38
Total	100	377	100	123	100	500

### Father's levels of education

The level of education of students's fathers is given below in Table 6.9. A minority of students (31.5% of total) stated that their father had a postgraduate degree while a proportion of 23.7% (of total) stated a higher level of education nod their father. A small minority of students (7.4% of total) stated that the level of education of their father was 'primary education'. A T-test comparing means of the two groups of students (degree-period of study) found no significant differences.

**Table 6.9 Level of father education, by type of study**

Level of education	degree		period of study		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Primary education	7.1	27	8.2	10	7.4	37
lower/compulsory secondary education	10.3	39	11.5	14	10.6	53
Upper/ post-compulsory secondary education	10.3	39	10.7	13	10.4	52
Vocational education/training	16.8	64	15.6	19	16.5	83
higher education (not postgraduate degree)	24.5	93	21.3	26	23.7	119
higher education (post graduate degree)	31.1	118	32.8	40	31.5	158
Total	100	380	100	122	100	502

### Parental education

A variable with three categories was created grouping together students that (i) both parents had a higher level of education (also including those with a postgraduate degree), (ii) one parent had a higher level of education (also including those with a postgraduate degree), and (iii) no parent had a higher level of education. The results obtained are given in Table 6.10 below:

**Table 6.10 Parental education, by type of study**

Level of education	degree		period of study		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
both parents with higher education	38.1	143	41.8	51	39	193
one parent with higher education	24	90	16.4	20	22.1	110
no parent with higher education	37.9	142	41.8	51	38.8	194
Total	100	375	100	122	100	497

A majority of students (39% of total) had both parents having a higher level of education, while a proportion of 38.8% had no parent having higher level of

education. A T-test comparing means found no significant differences among the two groups of students. We may, however, note that the proportion of students with one parent having higher education is higher among degree students (24% against 16.4%). In sum, comparing students studying for a degree in the UK with those studying for a period we may conclude that they are broadly similar in terms of their family socio-economic status and parental education with degree students in an only slightly higher position.

When these findings were compared with those of the end of 1998 ERASMUS survey into the socio-economic background of students (CEC, 2000) the following were observed: The Erasmus survey found that a total of 36% of Erasmus students reported that both parents had a higher education degree or other higher education qualification, 16% reported that only father, 8% only mother, and 41% no parent had a higher education educational level.

Concerning the income status of parents, the Erasmus survey found that 6% of students reported 'considerably higher than average', 42% 'higher than average', 39% 'average', 11% 'lower than average', and 3% 'considerably lower than average'. It is not unlikely that the differences between the Erasmus survey and the findings of the sample analysed here may well be due to sample differences as the Erasmus survey included students studying abroad for a period in all EU countries. As, however, the published findings of the Erasmus survey do not include data by country of host institution we cannot assess the host-country impact and, therefore, we cannot reach to a firm conclusion about how this sample compares with the Erasmus sample of EU students studying in the UK.

### Type of university

The name of the university where students study in the UK was requested and universities were grouped in two categories. 'New' universities (including mainly former polytechnics), and 'old' universities. Results are given below in Table 6.11.



**Table 6.11 Type of UK university where EU students study, by type of study**

<i>type of university</i>	<i>degree</i>		<i>period of study</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>
old	71.4	272	70.2	85	71.1	357
new	28.6	109	29.8	36	28.9	145

A majority of two-thirds of students (71.1%) study in 'old' UK universities. Less than one-third (28.9) study at 'new' UK universities. A Chi-square test showed that the differences between the two groups of students were not significant.

#### Financing of study abroad.

Students were asked to give the main source of finance of their studies abroad. Sources of finance were grouped into two categories (i) self-financed (i.e. family, personal savings, work) and (ii) sponsored (e.g. grant or loan from government, foundation, and so on). The main sources of finance of study abroad are given below in Table 6.12.

**Table 6.12 Main source of finance, by type of study**

	<i>degree</i>		<i>period of study</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>		<i>N</i>
<b>self-financed</b>	62.1	229	63.9	78	62.5	307
<b>sponsored</b>	37.9	140	36.1	44	37.5	184
<b>Total</b>	100	369	100	122	100	491

A majority of 62.5% of students were self-financed, while 37.5% stated as the main source of funding for their studies abroad a sponsor. A Chi-square test showed that the differences between the two groups of students were not significant.

#### Prior student experiences abroad

Table 6.13 presents proportions of various forms of student experience abroad, prior to the beginning of current course studied in the UK, by type of study. A Chi-square test showed significant differences between the two groups of students regarding

'secondary education' ( $p<0.000$ ), 'higher education' ( $p<0.000$ ), and 'work abroad' ( $p<0.000$ ). Differences were marginally not significant regarding 'primary education' ( $p<0.052$ ), 'school exchange/stayed with a family' ( $p<0.069$ ), and 'summer school abroad' ( $p<0.067$ ).

**Table 6.13 Proportions of prior experience abroad, by type of study**

experience	degree		period of study		Total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
holidays	90.9	339	91.1	112	90.9	451
primary education	15.9	54	9.4	11	14.3	391
secondary education	21.7	74	5.1	6	17.5	80
higher education	28.8	95	4.3	5	22.5	100
School exchange/ stayed with a family	41.1	134	49.6	59	43.4	193
Summer school abroad	24.7	81	32.5	38	26.7	119
Training/internship	13.6	44	11.3	13	13	57
Work abroad	35.1	117	19.7	23	31.1	140

An index of student experience abroad was created to be used in subsequent analysis. The index sums positive answers of the categories of prior student experience abroad included in the above table. The mean of prior student experience abroad for all students was 2.3 ( $\pm 1.4$ ). The mean of degree students prior experience abroad was 2.4 ( $\pm 1.5$ ) and of period of study students 2.1 ( $\pm 1.0$ ). The mean differences were marginally not significant ( $p<0.066$ ). It thus appears that degree students may have slightly more experiences abroad, prior to the beginning of their current course, than those studying for a period.

### Language competence

Students were asked to give the languages they command and the level of competence (able to cope with limited routine situations - able to use the language effectively and accurately in most contexts - fluent) for each language given. In Table 6.14 below the proportion of the number of languages that students speak 'effectively and accurately in most contexts' and 'fluent' are given. The mean number of languages spoken

('effectively and accurately in most contexts' and 'fluent') by all students was 2.5 ( $\pm 0.7$ ). The mean number of languages spoken by degree students was 2.5 ( $\pm 0.7$ ) and by period of study abroad students 2.4 ( $\pm 0.6$ ) but the mean differences were not significant. We may, therefore, argue that degree students may be slightly more polyglot than those studying for a period.

**Table 6.14 Language competence of students, by type of study**

type of study	number of languages spoken (%)			
	1	2	3	4
degree	4.4	46	35.8	13.8
period of study	3.2	51.6	37.9	7.3
Total	4.1	47.3	36.3	12.2

### Family experience abroad

Students were asked to state whether their family had living experience abroad. Results obtained are given in Table 6.15 below. Chi-square tests of significance showed that differences between the two groups of students were significant regarding 'father studied abroad' ( $p < 0.006$ ), 'father worked/lived abroad' ( $p < 0.007$ ), 'brother/sister studied abroad' ( $p < 0.025$ ), 'other family members studied abroad' ( $p < 0.040$ ). Differences were marginally not significant regarding 'mother studied abroad' ( $p < 0.076$ ), 'mother worked/lived abroad' ( $p < 0.062$ ), and 'other family members worked/lived abroad' ( $p < 0.061$ ).

**Table 6.15 Family experience abroad, by type of study**

	studied						worked/lived					
	degree		period of study		total		degree		period of study		total	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
mother	15.2	59	9.7	12	13.9	71	35.4	137	27.4	34	33.5	171
father	17.6	68	8.1	10	15.3	78	38.2	148	25.8	32	35.2	180
brother/sister	30.5	118	21	26	28.2	144	30.7	119	26.6	33	29.7	152
other family members	24	93	16.1	20	22.1	113	38	147	29.8	37	36	184

An index of family experience abroad was created summing positive answers on the above categories of family experience abroad. The mean ( $\pm$ SD) of family experience abroad was 2.1 ( $\pm$ 1.9). The mean family experience abroad of degree students was 2.2 ( $\pm$ 2.0) and of period of study abroad students 1.6 ( $\pm$ 1.7). Mean differences were significant ( $p < 0.002$ ). We may, therefore, conclude that degree students have more familial experiences abroad than those studying abroad for a period.

In sum, considering personal and familial experiences abroad and language competencies as elements of 'mobility capital' (Murphy-Lejeune, 1998, 2002) we may conclude that degree and period of study students are broadly similar, with degree students appearing to have rather slightly more such social dispositions than period of study students. It would, however, be interesting for another research to examine how mobile students compare with non-mobile students in terms of such social dispositions and assess how and to what extent student educational choices are influenced by such social dispositions before a firm conclusion about their role is drawn.

#### Year of beginning current course

For degree students, information was sought on the year that the course studied begun in the UK. Results obtained are given below in Table 6.16:

**Table 6.16 Year of beginning course in the UK, degree students**

Year	%	
1999 (and after)	49.6	190
1998	20.9	80
1997	17.2	66
1996 (and before)	12.3	47
Total	100	383

Almost half of respondents (49.6%) began their current course studied in the UK after 1999. One-fifth (20.9%) of respondents began their current course in 1998. Less than one-fifth (17.2%) in 1997 and over one out of ten in 1996 or before.

## 2 The choice to study abroad

Following the objectives set for this investigation, and on the basis of the findings of the qualitative analysis, all students were given different reasons they may have for choosing to study their current course abroad and not in their home country. Students were also asked to rate the importance to them of each reason on a four-level scale (1= not at all important, 2= of some importance, 3= important, 4=very important). For those reasons that were not considered applicable to all students the option 0=not relevant was also given. Specifically, 43 such reasons were given to students studying for a degree and 28 reasons to students studying abroad for a period.

## 3 Frequencies

### *Degree students*

Reasons for studying abroad, given by EU (non-UK) students studying for a degree in public funded UK universities, are given below in Table 6.17. Percentages represent those rating each reason important/very important.

The most frequent reasons for studying abroad given by degree students relate to their professional and career aspirations. Almost two thirds rated highly reasons related to students perception and belief that study abroad can improve their career prospects (*I wanted to improve my chances of getting a good job*, 63.4%, *I thought that studying abroad would improve my job prospects*, 61.5%, *I thought that for the career I wanted it would be better to study abroad*, 60.7%).

Over two thirds rated highly their desire to get international experience and thus improve their labour market prospects (*I thought that having international experience I would have better job prospects*, 68.2%).

**Table 6.17 Reasons for studying for a degree abroad (percentage rating each as important/very important)**

Reason	%	N
I wanted to broaden my horizons	70.7	379
I thought that having international experience I would have better job prospects	68.2	377
I wanted to experience other cultures	64.0	381
I wanted to improve my chances of getting a good job	63.4	377
I thought that studying abroad would improve my job prospects	61.5	379
I thought that for the career I wanted it would be better to study abroad	60.7	377
I wanted to improve my foreign language competence <sup>2</sup>	53.7	380
I particularly wanted to study in the UK	49.7	380
I thought that a higher level of English proficiency would improve my job prospects <sup>3</sup>	49.6	377
I thought that my preferred course would be of a better quality abroad	48.0	373
I wanted to get a different perspective on my subject	47.7	373
I particularly wanted to study at an institution with an international reputation	45.1	377
I wanted to experience foreign academic communities	40.6	379
I needed a change in my life	41.5	376
I wanted to get better research experience than I could get in my home country	39.5	377
I wanted to become more independent	40.1	377
I wanted to experience different teaching and learning methods	39.4	378
I particularly wanted to study at the institution that I am now at	36.1	379
It was difficult to get into my preferred subject in my home country	35.1	376
I wanted a better quality education than the one offered in my home country	33.6	372
My preferred course was not available in my home country	32.2	376
My preferred course would take longer to complete in my home country	27.5	367
It was difficult to get into my preferred institution in my home country	27.3	373
I thought that facilities in my country were not very good	25.7	378
It was difficult to get into any higher education institution in my home country	23.8	369
I particularly wanted to live in the city/town where my current institution is based	22.0	378
The conditions offered by the sponsor/funding body were attractive	19.8	378
I wanted my previous qualification to be recognised in my home country	16.7	371
I thought that contact with teachers in my home country would be difficult	16.7	371
I thought that courses in my home country would be too general	15.9	371
I thought that teaching methods would be boring in my home country	15.9	372
Many good students go to study abroad	13.5	378
Former teachers recommended that I study abroad	12.5	377
I wanted to delay getting a full-time job	11.2	376
My family wanted me to study abroad	8.2	377
I thought it would be less expensive to study abroad	7.9	365
It seemed less sure that I would complete my studies in my home country	7.8	371
I was not sure that I would get through the end of year exams in my home country	5.1	375
My friends had gone abroad to study	4.8	374
It was difficult to get information about courses in my home country	4.3	372
I wanted to postpone military service	3.5	370
I thought that the weather would be better abroad	0.8	378
I wanted to postpone marriage	0.5	377

<sup>2</sup> This percentage includes 47 Irish students whose mother tongue is also English. When Irish students are excluded the percentage for this reason is 61,2% (N=330)

<sup>3</sup> This percentage includes 47 Irish students whose mother tongue is also English. When Irish students are excluded the percentage for this reason is 56,6% (N=330)

A majority of students rated highly their desire to improve their foreign language competence (*I wanted to improve my foreign language competence, 53.7%*) and their belief that a higher level of English proficiency would improve their labour market prospects (*I thought that a higher level of English proficiency would improve my job prospects, 49.6%*). It, thus, appears that the choice to study abroad at a higher level seems to be predominantly influenced by student social perceptions related to the employment value of higher education qualifications and the additional skills developed through studying and living abroad, including mainly international experience and foreign language competence.

Significant minorities of students rated highly reasons related to the higher quality of studies and qualifications abroad. Specifically, students rated highly the higher quality of study abroad than at home (*I thought that my preferred course would be of better quality abroad, 48%, I wanted a better quality education than the one offered in my home country, 33.6%*), and the international reputation of their institution abroad (*I particularly wanted to study at an institution with an international reputation, 45.1%*). It appears that students may also choose to study abroad if they perceive the academic standing, status and prestige of studies and qualifications abroad higher than those at home. It thus emerges that student choices to study abroad take place within, and are influenced by the international hierarchy of higher education systems and institutions. Studies and qualifications in high status and prestigious institutions or systems seem to be perceived as improving student cultural capital and their career and social prospects and aspirations.

Frequent were also reasons given by students that relate to their personal development (*I wanted to broaden my horizons, 70.7%, I needed a change in my life, 41.5%, I wanted to become more independent, 40.1%*), and an interest in gaining social and academic experience and knowledge abroad (*I wanted to experience other cultures, 64%, I wanted to get a different perspective on my subject, 47.7%, I wanted to experience foreign academic communities, 40.6%, I wanted to experience different teaching and learning methods, 39.4%, I particularly wanted to live in the city/town where my current institution is based, 22%*).

Minorities of students rated highly reasons for studying abroad that were related to difficulties they faced in accessing higher education systems (*It was difficult to get into any higher education institution in my home country*, 23.8%) or preferred institutions (*It was difficult to get into my preferred institution in my home country*, 27.3%) or preferred subjects in their home country (*It was difficult to get into my preferred subject in my home country*, 35.1%). In those cases the choice to study abroad may best be seen as a social strategy bypassing national restrictive admissions systems and respective higher education policies. Such a social strategy, although it is a somewhat 'forced' than 'free' choice between different options (home or abroad) may also be best explained as relating to students' career aspirations and social integration. Similarly, the choice to study abroad may also be influenced by the non-availability at home of courses students may prefer to study on. This reason was rated highly by almost one-third of students (*My preferred course was not available in my home country*, 32.2%)

Less frequent were reasons that relate to certain qualitative characteristics of home higher education systems. Over one-fourth of students rated highly the length of courses at home (*My preferred course would take longer to complete in my home country*, 27.5%), one-seventh rated highly teaching and learning methods at home (*I thought that teaching methods in my home country would be boring*, 15.9%, *I thought that contact with teachers in my home country would be difficult*, 16.7%) and course orientation (*I thought that courses in my home country would be too general*, 15.9%). It thus appears that the diversity of higher education systems and traditions in the EU may also play some role and influence student choices to study abroad. Other minorities rated highly broader (i.e. non-educational) social reasons such as other influences (*Many good students go abroad to study*, 13.5%, *Former teachers recommended that I study abroad*, 12.5%, *My family wanted me to study abroad*, 8.2%, *My friends had gone abroad to study*, 4.8%) funding abroad (*The conditions offered by the sponsor/funding body were attractive*, 19.8%), postpone military service (*I wanted to postpone military service*, 3.5%) or marriage (*I wanted to postpone marriage*, 0.5%).



### *Period of study abroad students*

Frequencies of reasons for studying abroad, given by students studying for a period of study abroad in public funded UK universities, are given below in Table 6.18. Percentages represent those rating each reason as important/very important.

**Table 6.18 Reasons for studying for a period abroad (percentage rating each as important/very important)**

Reason	%	N
I wanted to experience other cultures	94.3	123
I wanted to broaden my horizons	93.5	123
I wanted to improve my foreign language competence	92.6	122
I thought that studying abroad would improve my job prospects	85.4	123
I thought that a higher level of English proficiency would improve my job prospects	81.3	123
I thought that having international experience I would have better job prospects	80.5	123
I thought that for the career I wanted it would be better to study abroad for a period	76.4	123
I particularly wanted to study in the UK	66.4	123
I wanted to get a different perspective on my subject	65.0	123
I wanted to experience different teaching and learning methods	63.1	122
I wanted to experience foreign academic communities	59.0	122
I wanted to become more independent	52.8	123
I needed a change in my life	50.4	123
I wanted to get research experience abroad	32.5	123
I particularly wanted to study at an institution with international reputation	28.5	123
Teachers at home institution recommended that I study abroad	26.0	123
I particularly wanted to study at the institution where I am now at	23.0	122
I thought that many good students go to study abroad	21.1	123
The conditions offered by the sponsor/funding body were attractive	18.0	122
I wanted to live in the city/town where my current institution s based	17.1	123
I thought that facilities (e.g. libraries, laboratories) in my home country were not very good	13.1	122
I wanted to delay the completion of my study	8.2	122
My friends had gone abroad to study	8.1	123
I wanted to delay getting a full-time job	6.7	120
My family wanted me to study abroad	3.3	121
I wanted to postpone military service	0.8	120
I thought that the weather would be better abroad	0.8	122
I wanted to postpone marriage	0.8	123

Over nine out of ten of respondents rated as important/very important a desire to experience other cultures (94.3%), to broaden their horizons (93.5%), and to improve their foreign language competence (92.6%). It appears that gaining cultural experience, communication, and knowledge, and improving foreign language competence, are the dominant student motives for studying abroad for a period.

Over three out of four rated highly reasons related to the employment value of study abroad for a period (*I thought that studying abroad would improve my job prospects,*

85.4%, *I thought that for the career I want it would be better to study abroad for a period*, 76.4%) and the development of skills such as international experience (*I thought that having international experience I would have better job prospects*, 80.5%) and English language proficiency (*I thought that a higher level of English proficiency would improve my job prospects*, 81.3%). It thus appears that students perceive that their study period abroad and the development of skills such as foreign language proficiency, international and intercultural experience and knowledge may improve their career and social prospects.

Over half of students rated highly reasons related to their interest in gaining academic experiences abroad. This included a desire to get a different subject perspective (*I wanted to get a different perspective on my subject*, 65%), experience different teaching learning methods (*I wanted to experience different teaching and learning methods*, 63.1), and foreign academic communities (*I wanted to experience different academic communities abroad*, 59%).

A majority of students rated highly personal reasons such as gaining personal independence (*I wanted to become more independent*, 52.8%) and change their lives. (*I wanted a change in my life*, 50.4%). Significant minorities of students rated highly the international status and prestige of institutions abroad (*I particularly wanted to study at an institution with international reputation*, 28.5%), and a desire to gain social experience abroad (*I wanted to live in the city/town where my current institution is based*, 17.1%) A small percentage of students rated highly broader (i.e. non educational) social reasons such as other influences (*I thought that many good students go to study abroad*, 21.1%, *Teachers at home institution recommended that I study abroad*, 26%, *My friends had gone abroad to study abroad*, 8.1%, *My family wanted me to study abroad*, 3.3%), funding (*The conditions offered by the sponsor/funding body were attractive*, 18%), a desire to delay the completion of studies at home by studying abroad for a period (*I wanted to delay the completion of my study*, 8.2%) , and delay entry into the labour market (*I wanted to delay getting a full-time job*, 6.7%) .

The examination of frequencies of reasons given for studying abroad for a period, and rated important/very important, by students suggests that such a choice was predominantly driven by perceptions that value highly the social experience and the personal benefits accrued, such as the broadening of horizons, the cultural communication, and the improvement of foreign language skills. Perceptions concerning the employment value of a study period abroad and in particular, the development of certain skills useful in the transition to the labour market, such as foreign language proficiency, and the international experience gained were also rated highly. These were followed by a desire to gain academic experience abroad, the academic status and prestige of study abroad as well as broader social reasons.

It also appears that student reasons for studying abroad for a period are rather in congruence with those studying abroad for a full degree. It is, however, noteworthy that students studying abroad for a period seem to assign stronger emphasis on the social experience, cultural communication and the desire to improve their foreign language competence than those studying for the full duration of their course abroad. The employment value, however, of a study period abroad is also highly appreciated by period of study students

In sum, the examination of student perceptions of, and motives for study at a higher level for a degree or for a period of study, in a country other than their own, shows that such a choice is mainly influenced by a range of different factors including:

- 1) student perceptions concerning labour markets demand for skills such as foreign language competence and international experience and communication
- 2) student perceptions concerning the academic status and prestige of study abroad
- 3) student interest in social and academic experiences abroad
- 4) the personal development of students
- 5) the difficulties in accessing national higher education courses at home
- 6) qualitative characteristics of national higher education systems
- 7) broader (i.e. non educational) social reasons

Frequencies of reasons given by students also suggest that, although different factors may be involved and influence student choices to study abroad, the most important motives involved relate to students' aspirations for cultural capital, their career and social aspirations for social integration in the hierarchy of occupations and social hierarchies. These findings suggest that international educational mobility may best be seen as a social strategy for either upward social mobility or maintaining students' high social position. It can, therefore, be argued that these findings further support the argument that higher education qualifications have become common entry qualifications for a growing number of occupations and they are more relevant to the social stratification and social mobility. These findings also support the argument that the employment value of higher education qualifications, as social criteria involved in the choice to study at a higher level, is more appreciated than academic criteria as such.

If, however, the choice to study at a higher level is associated with the career and social aspirations of students, the choice to study at a higher level in another country seems to be primarily influenced by the additional skills developed through studying and living abroad. Such skills include mainly foreign language competence, international experiences, and intercultural communication. It appears that such skills together with the status and prestige of qualifications obtained abroad constitute a 'set' of attractive educational credentials that students perceive useful in the social competition for entry into and development within changing and more 'international' labour markets in the EU, the hierarchies of occupations and social hierarchies.

#### 4 Principal Component Analysis and Analysis of Covariance

The next steps taken in the examination and analysis of student reasons for studying abroad were i) to reduce data (i.e. reasons given), and ii) to search for relationships between demographic characteristics of the two groups of students (i.e. degree students and period of study abroad students) and sets of reasons given (i.e. reasons for choosing to study abroad and selecting the UK as the place to study abroad).

Data reduction was performed in order to summarise the large number of responses (reasons given) to a smaller number of factors, and to explore whether there exist in the data underlining processes based on patterns of correlations among variables that are relatively independent of one another, and allow a better and more concise description and understanding of data. Exploratory Principal Components Analysis (PCA) was, therefore, selected for as Tabachnick & Fidell argue it has ‘considerable utility in reducing numerous variables down to a few factors...The factors summarise the patterns of correlations in the observed correlation matrix and...when scores on factors are estimated for each subject, they are often more reliable than the number of observed variables’ (p. 583). Exploratory (instead of confirmatory) PCA was performed as response variables were chosen with no potential underlying processes in mind, and the research objective was theory development as opposed to theory testing. The response variables (reasons given) included in PCA were considered as ordinal variables (with each category assigned a score value from 1=not at all important to 4=very important). To increase homogeneity among respondents questions that were not considered applicable to all respondents were excluded from subsequent analysis (exception to this were variables related to language as a reason for studying abroad that cannot be considered applicable to Irish students)<sup>4</sup>. Since the variables used were all of the same type and magnitude Varimax Rotation and extraction method based on the covariance matrix were employed. The minimum loading for a variable to mark a factor, set for this investigation, was  $>0.40$  (see Appendix )

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<sup>4</sup> Sample limitations did not allow increased sample homogeneity that could be obtained by running different factor procedures for groups of students with different characteristics (e.g. for students of different origin, level of study, sex etc.).

Searching for relationships within the data was performed with Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) for the two groups of students (i.e. degree students and period of study abroad students) and respective sets of factors scores obtained with exploratory Principal Components Analysis. Specifically, possible associations of -nominal and continuous- variables, as independent variables (IVs) were examined with means of factor scores as dependent variables (DVs). ANCOVA was, therefore, selected for it also assesses main effects and interactions of (IVs) after (DVs) are adjusted for differences associated with one or more covariates (CVs), variables that are measured before the DV and are correlated with it (Tabachnic & Fidell, 2000, p.275). After adjustment of outliers in covariates, assumptions of ANCOVA (number of categorical and covariates used as independent variables, linear relationship of covariates to dependent variables, sample size, and normal distribution) were met. In the following sections results of PCA and ANCOVA for each group of students (i.e. degree and period of study students) and sets of reasons given are presented and analysed.

### *Degree students*

Data reduction was performed with Principal Component Analysis (PCA) in order to identify possible underlining processes based on patterns of correlations among reasons given by students for choosing to study abroad for a degree. A total of 34 variables were used in the factor procedure with 328 participants with valid answers.

Factors extracted that influence the choice to study abroad

As presented below, in Table 6.19 seven factors were extracted with total variance explained 53%<sup>5</sup>. In particular, the first factor, contributing 11.5 percent of the variance, was composed of 7 items. They involved perceptions of improved career prospects and acquisition of additional labour market skills, such as international

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<sup>5</sup> The variance explained by factors extracted in this PCA procedure (as well as those in following sections) may not be considered low as this may well be attributed to the small scale (four levels) used.

experience and English language proficiency. This factor (Factor 1) was labelled 'Labour market value & skills'. The second factor (Factor 2), contributing 8.8 of the variance was composed by 6 items, involving perceptions of higher quality of study, courses, facilities and teaching methods. This factor was labelled 'Quality of Study'. Factor 3, contributing 8.1 percent of the variance, was composed of 6 items relating mainly to aspects of academic and social experiences gained through studying and living abroad. These include experience of teaching and learning methods, academic communities, different perspective in subject studied as well as experience of other cultures and language learning. This factor was named 'Academic and Social Experience'.

**Table 6.19 Principal Component Analysis: Reasons for choosing to study for a degree abroad**

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Label</i>	<i>No of items</i>	<i>Eigenvalue</i>	<i>% of variance</i>
1	Labour market value & skills	7	3.9	11.5
2	Quality of Study	6	3.0	8.8
3	Academic and Social Experience	6	2.7	8.1
4	Accessibility	3	2.6	7.7
5	Personal Development	3	2.1	6.2
6	Home System Qualities	4	1.8	5.5
7	Status of institution	3	1.6	4.9
				Total: 53%

Factor 4 contributing 7.7 percent of the variance, was composed by 3 items that involve difficulties of access in home country higher education system, or preferred institutions and subjects. This factor was labelled 'Accessibility'. Factor 5, contributing 6.2 of the variance, was composed by 3 items referring to personal benefits accrued in studying in a foreign country, such as personal independence, the broadening of horizons, and cultural experience. This factor was called 'Personal Development'. Factor 6, was composed by 4 items and contributed 5.5 percent of the variance. It included variables related to qualitative characteristics of home country higher education systems and was labelled 'Home System Qualities'. Factor 7 was composed by 3 items, contributing 4.9% of the total variance explained. These items related to particular institutions, their international reputation, and the place (city or town) they are based at. This factor was labelled 'Status of Institution'. Factors extracted were subsequently tested for their independence with Bivariate Correlation

procedure. No significant correlations were found with the exception of factors 'Quality of Study' and 'Home system Qualities' that a weak correlation was found (Pearson's  $r = 0.111$  and  $p < 0.044$ ). This may well be due to the complexity of two items marking both factors (for details see Appendix 2).

#### Analysis of Covariance (with ANCOVA)

The next step taken in the exploration of the social factors influencing student choice to study abroad, was to examine the association of principal components extracted with several characteristics of the sample. Therefore, for each factor, Analysis of Covariance was performed with the following characteristics as independent variables (IVs).

Variables used in Analysis of Covariance (IVs):

#### **Factors:**

- 1. Country of origin (grouped).** Due to small number of participants in some of the categories of student origin, this variable was grouped. Grouping was based on the estimated means of scores of factors 'Quality of study' and 'Accessibility' as follows: *South European countries* (Portugal-Italy-Spain) ( $n=55$ ), *Low Countries and Austria* (Belgium-Netherlands-Luxembourg-Austria) ( $n=50$ ), *France* ( $n=51$ ), *Germany* ( $n=57$ ), *Scandinavian countries* (Sweden-Denmark-Finland) ( $n=49$ ), *Ireland* ( $n=47$ ), *Greece* ( $n=78$ ).
- 2. Type of university.** Binary variable: 'old' ( $n=213$ ), 'new' ( $n=81$ ).
- 3. Parental education.** 3 levels: *no parent having higher education* ( $n=110$ ), *one parent having higher education* ( $n=70$ ), *both parents having higher education* ( $n=114$ ).
- 4. Family socio-economic status (perceived).** Due to small number of participants, categories 'below average' and 'low' of this variable were grouped together as follows: *high* ( $n=38$ ), *above average* ( $n=126$ ) *average* ( $n=118$ ) *below average/low* ( $n=12$ ).
- 5. Sex.** Binary variable: males ( $n=126$ ), females ( $n=168$ ).
- 6. Level of study:** 3 levels: undergraduate/postgraduate/research postgraduate.



**7. Subject studied (grouped).** 8 categories: Medicine/allied subjects (n=31), Physics/Maths/ Computer science (n=27), Engineering/Technology/Architecture (n=37), Social/ Economic/Political studies (n=63), Business Administrative studies (n=40), Languages/Humanities/Arts (n=48), Law (n=14), Other (n=34).

**8. Source of finance.** Binary variable: self-financed (n=180), sponsored (n=114).

**Covariates:**

**Age:** continuous

**Index of prior experience abroad:** continuous

**Number of languages spoken:** continuous

**Index of family experience abroad:** continuous

**Year of beginning course:** continuous

**Results of ANCOVA**

The results obtained with Analysis of Covariance are summarised below in Table 6.20.

**Table 6.20 Significant associations of factors for choosing to study for a degree abroad**

Factor	Labour Market Value & Skills	Quality of Study	Academic and Social Experience	Accessibility	Personal Development	Home system Qualities	Status of Institution abroad
Country of Origin	X	X	X	X		X	
Type of University		X		Ms			X
Parental Education			Mn		X	X	
Socio-economic Status							
Sex	X				X		
Level of Study	X	Ms					
Subject	X		Mn			X	
Source of finance		Mn					
Age	X				X		
Experience Abroad	X						
Language Competence							
Family Experience Abroad							
Beginning Course							

*X* = significant association ( $p < 0.005$ ), *Ms* = marginally significant ( $p > 0.045$  and  $< 0.99$ ), *Mn* = marginally non-significant ( $p < 0.099$ )

It appears that patterns of student perceptions of and motives for studying abroad relate to student country of origin, parental education, status of institution abroad, sex, level of study, field of study, age, and prior student experience abroad.

#### *Factor 1: Labour Market Value and Skills*

The first factor entered in ANCOVA was factor 'Labour market value and skills'. Adjusted for covariates used in the model, this factor was significantly associated with *sex* ( $p<0.011$ ), *level of study* ( $p<0.045$ ), *subject studied* ( $p<0.000$ ), *age* ( $p<0.004$ ), *prior experience abroad* ( $p<0.012$ ), and *student country of origin* ( $p<0.001$ ).

According to mean estimates, Scandinavian students had the highest mean (0.383), followed by German (0.382) and French students (0.335). Greek and Irish students had the lowest mean with 0.007 and -0.508 respectively. When pairwise comparisons, based on the estimated marginal means, between the categories of origin were examined no significant differences were found between students of different origin, with the exception of Irish students. Irish students assign significantly less importance to the factor 'Labour market value and skills'. This is obviously due to the fact that Irish students do not load on the factor item English language proficiency as a reason to study abroad since Irish students are native speakers of English language. It is also interesting to note that when Irish students were excluded from the Analysis of Covariance no association was found between country of student origin and factor 'Labour Market Value'. That is, the importance assigned to this factor is not significantly different among students from different EU countries. In other words, a rather homogeneous perception is held amongst students from EU (non-UK) countries studying in the UK, that their choice to study abroad and not in their home country may improve their labour market prospects.

It, thus, appears that additional skills such as international experience and foreign language competence are perceived important for the successful entry and development within labour markets across all EU societies.

A strong significant association of factor 'Labour market value & skills' was found with student's sex. In particular, the difference of the estimated marginal means between males and females was 0.287 and significant ( $p < 0.011$ ). Male students assign more importance to labour market value of study abroad than female students. It appears that gender differences are in play in student motives for study abroad. This finding further supports the argument that males are rather more professionally orientated than females in their educational choices.

A strong association of factor 'Labour market value and skills' was found with subject studied in the UK ( $p < 0.000$ ). Students studying 'Law' had the highest estimated mean (0.802) of this factor. This was followed by 'Business Administration' (0.362), 'Social/Economic/ Political Studies' (0.173), and 'Engineering/Technology/ Architecture' (-0.004). According to pairwise comparisons, the difference of the estimated marginal means between subject group 'Business Administration' and 'Medicine/Allied Subjects' was  $b = 0.501$  and statistically significant ( $p < 0.026$ ); with 'Engineering/Technology /Architecture' 0.411 and significant ( $p < 0.043$ ); with 'Languages/Humanities/Arts' 0.694 and significant ( $p < 0.000$ ). Mean differences were also significant when 'Law' students were compared with 'Medicine/Allied Subjects' ( $b = 0.940$  and  $p < 0.001$ ), 'Physics/Maths/Computer Science' ( $b = 0.728$  and  $p < 0.011$ ), 'Engineering/Technology/ Architecture' ( $b = 0.851$  and  $p < 0.002$ ), 'Social/Economic/ Political Studies' ( $b = 0.629$  and  $p < 0.012$ ) and 'Languages/Humanities/Arts' ( $b = 1.133$  and  $p < 0.000$ ). Estimated mean differences were also significant when students studying 'Social/Economic/ Political Studies' were compared with those studying 'Languages/Humanities/Arts' ( $b = 0.505$  and  $p < 0.002$ ). In other words, a differentiated pattern emerges among students studying different subjects concerning their perceptions of and motives for study abroad. Specifically, the perception that study abroad may improve labour market prospects is stronger among those studying Law, Business and Administrative studies, Social/Economic/Political studies, and Engineering/ Technology/Architecture.

It appears that the international credentials developed through studying abroad are valued higher by students studying in certain fields. These differences suggest that successful entry into and development within certain labour market domains seem to

be perceived by students as requiring more international credentials. These include business and administrative positions in the labour market, technology-related jobs, the construction industry, the legal profession, and labour market domains related to the economic, and political social studies.

A weak association of factor 'Labour market value and skills' was found with student's level of study. Research postgraduate (MPhil, PhD) students had a higher estimated mean of this factor than postgraduate (MA, MSc) and undergraduate students. Pairwise comparisons showed that the difference of the estimated marginal means between research postgraduate and undergraduate students was 0.435 and significant ( $p < 0.014$ ) while with postgraduates was 0.235 but not significant. That is, the higher the level of study the strongest the perception of mobile students from EU countries that their choice to study abroad may improve their career prospects. It appears that the more advanced the levels of study and expertise, the more importance is assigned to the employment value of study abroad, the successful entry and development within the labour market, and the social integration of students. The higher importance assigned to this factor by students studying research degrees (MPhil, PhD) may reflect the growing international dimension of research and academic professions in the EU. It can, therefore, be argued that successful entry and development within the scientific and research social domains is perceived to require international experience, knowledge, and communication and influence student choices. It may also be argued that the dominance of English language in international scientific and academic communication and fora (e.g. conferences) also influences educational choices of students aspiring to such professional careers.

Age of EU mobile students was significantly (and strongly) associated with factor 'Labour market value and skills' ( $b = 0.008$  and  $p < 0.004$ ). In particular, for one year of age increase the importance assigned to this factor increases by 0.008. That is, older mobile students assign more importance to the labour market value of study abroad in their choice to study abroad. As age however, is a correlate of level of study it may be argued that these differences may be best interpreted along similar lines.

Prior experience abroad of students is significantly (and strongly) associated with factor 'Labour market value and skills' ( $b=-0.101$ ,  $p<0.012$ ). In other words, the more the prior (before current course studied) experience abroad, the less the importance assigned to the labour market value of study abroad in student choice to study abroad. Not unexpectedly, students with longer prior experience of living and studying in different countries assign less importance in their choice to study abroad to the acquisition of additional skills, as they already have them.

### *Factor 2: Quality of Study*

Factor 'Quality of Study', after adjustment for covariates, was significantly associated with *country of student origin* ( $p<0.000$ ), *type of UK university* ( $p<0.002$ ), *level of study* ( $p<0.050$ ). This factor was only marginally not significantly associated with *source of finance* ( $p<0.098$ ).

In particular, a strong significant association was found of factor 'Quality of study' with country of student origin ( $p<0.000$ ). Specifically, Greek students had the highest estimated mean of this factor (0.445), followed by South European (0.177) Irish students (-0.200), Low Countries and Austrian (-0.260), German (-0.393), France (-0.430), and Scandinavian students (-0.513). Pairwise comparisons showed that the mean differences were significant between Greek students and students from Low Countries and Austria ( $p<0.000$ ,  $b=0.706$ ), French ( $p<0.000$ ,  $b=0.875$ ), German ( $p<0.000$ ,  $b=0.838$ ), Scandinavian ( $p<0.000$ ,  $b=0.958$ ), and Irish students ( $p<0.002$ ,  $b=0.645$ ). Similarly, the estimated mean of South European students was significantly different from Low Countries and Austrian ( $p<0.026$ ,  $b=0.436$ ), French ( $p<0.003$ ,  $b=0.607$ ), German ( $p<0.002$ ,  $b=0.570$ ) and Scandinavian students ( $p<0.001$ ,  $b=0.690$ ). No significant differences of South European students were found with Irish and Greek students. Moreover, no significant differences were found between French, German, Low Countries and Austrian, and Scandinavian students.

It appears that students from South European countries i.e. Portugal, Italy, Spain, notably Greece, and Ireland assign more importance to the higher quality of study abroad in their choice to study abroad than French, German, Scandinavian and

students from Low Countries and Austria. It can, therefore, be argued that there is in the European educational space a variable pattern of international hierarchy of higher education systems and institutions, based on their academic standing and prestige. Specifically, the evidence of EU students studying in the UK collected in this research suggests that on this international hierarchy the higher education system of South European countries i.e. Spain, Italy, Portugal and notably Greece, and Ireland are perceived to have a lower position. Within such an hierarchy of systems, the choice of students from South European countries and Ireland to study abroad is more associated with their desire to acquire educational qualifications of higher status and prestige more than students from other European countries i.e. France, Germany, Low countries and Austria, and Scandinavian countries.

Factor 'Quality of Study' was also strongly associated with the type of university where students study in the UK. Mobile students from EU countries studying in 'old' UK universities had a higher estimated marginal mean of factor score (0.003) than those studying in 'new' UK universities (-0.373). According to pairwise comparisons, the difference of estimated marginal means of factor 'Quality of Study' between students studying in 'old' UK universities and those studying in 'new' was 0.411 and significant ( $p < 0.002$ ). That is, students studying in 'old' UK universities assign more importance to the higher quality of study, in their choice to study abroad, than those studying in 'new' universities. This seems to reflect the internal hierarchical characteristics and stratification of UK universities with 'old' UK universities perceived of a higher status than those UK institutions that more recently acquired university status (old polytechnics). It thus appears that the higher the academic standing and prestige of the institution abroad the more the choice to study abroad is associated with the status and prestige of educational qualifications obtained abroad.

A weak association was found of factor 'Quality of Study' with level of study ( $p < 0.050$ ). Postgraduate (MA, MSc) students had a lower estimated marginal mean (-0.385) than research postgraduate (-0.007) and undergraduate (-0.003) students. According to pairwise comparisons, the mean difference was significant between postgraduate and undergraduate students ( $b = -0.346$ ,  $p < 0.022$ ) and marginally not significant with research postgraduate ( $b = -0.306$ ,  $p < 0.080$ ). That is, postgraduate

students (i.e. Masters') assign less importance to the quality of study in their choice to study abroad than research postgraduate and undergraduate students. It thus appears that the choice to study for a Master's level degree abroad may be less associated with a desire for higher academic standing and status education. This rather supports the argument that the choice to study abroad for a Master's degree is associated more with the acquisition of additional skills and international credentials than academic standing and status education as such.

### *Factor 3: 'Academic and Social Experience'*

After adjustment for covariates used in the ANCOVA model, factor 'Academic and Social Experience' was significantly associated with country of student origin ( $p < 0.001$ ). This factor was only marginally not associated with parental education of students ( $p < 0.089$ ), and subject studied ( $p < 0.060$ ).

In particular, German students had the highest estimated mean of this factor (0.276), followed by South European (0.194), French (0.159), and Scandinavian students (0.139). Pairwise comparisons showed that estimated mean differences were significant between Irish students and South European ( $p < 0.000$ ,  $b = -890$ ), Low Countries and Austrian ( $p < 0.004$ ,  $b = -706$ ), French ( $p < 0.001$ ,  $b = -855$ ), German ( $p < 0.000$ ,  $b = -937$ ), Scandinavian ( $p < 0.001$ ,  $b = -835$ ), and Greek ( $p < 0.016$ ,  $b = -539$ ). This is, however, due to the fact that this factor is also composed of variables related to English language that Irish students are native speakers of. When Irish students were excluded from the sample country of origin was not associated with this factor). Weak significant mean differences were also found between Greek and German students ( $p < 0.042$ ,  $b = -433$ ). That is, students from EU countries studying in the UK assign -in a rather homogeneous way- importance to the cultural benefits accrued in studying abroad. A rather weak exception to this are Greek students that assign significantly less importance to these benefits than other EU students, notably German students. This may be due to the fact that Greek students assign more importance in their choice to study abroad to the difficulties they faced in accessing higher education in their home country and therefore their choice to study abroad tends to be less a 'free' choice between different options (home or abroad).

It is noteworthy that although this factor was overall marginally not significant with subject group studied, some significant mean differences between categories of subject groups were found. In particular, 'Business Administration' had the highest mean of factor 'Academic and Social Experience' (0.188), followed by 'Social/Economic/Political Studies' (0.150), and 'Engineering/Technology/Architecture' (0.128). Subject group 'Physics/Maths/ Computer Science' had the lowest mean (-0.430). 'Physics/Maths/Computer Science' subject group was significantly lower when compared with 'Business Administration' ( $b=-0.618$  and  $p<0.011$ ), with 'Social/Economic/Political Studies' ( $b=-0.580$  and  $p<0.011$ ), with 'Engineering/Technology/Architecture' ( $b=-0.558$  and  $p<0.021$ ), and 'Languages/Humanities/Arts' ( $b=-0.475$  and  $p<0.044$ ). That is, students studying Business and Administrative studies, Social, Economic and Political studies and Engineering, Technology, Architecture assign more importance, in their choice to study abroad, to the academic and social experience and knowledge gained abroad than those studying other subjects, notably those studying Physics, Maths and Computer science. These differences amongst students in different fields of study may again suggest that international academic and -possibly more important!- social experience abroad are perceived more important for students' transition in the more 'internationalised' labour market domains.

Similarly, the overall relationship of this factor with parental education was marginally not significant ( $p<0.089$ ). When, however, estimated marginal means were examined the following were found: the mean difference between students with no parent having higher education and those with one parent having higher education is -0.200, but not significant; the mean difference with those students with both parents having higher education is -0.327 and significant ( $p<0.028$ ). The estimated mean difference between students with one parent having higher education and those with both parents having higher education is -0.127 but not significant.

Students with higher parental education assign more importance to the academic and social experience gained through study (and living) abroad. It appears that student perceptions of and motives for study abroad relate to students' social status. Those of



higher cultural background assign more importance to the academic and social experience in their choice to study abroad. It can, therefore, be argued that when the choice to study abroad is associated with maintaining student's high social position more importance is assigned to the academic and social experience abroad.

*Factor: 'Accessibility'*

Factor 'Accessibility' was significantly associated with country of student origin ( $p < 0.000$ ), and type of university ( $p < 0.047$ ), after adjustment for covariates. In particular, this factor was strongly associated with country of student origin ( $p < 0.000$ ). Greek student origin had the highest estimated mean (0.478), followed by Scandinavian (0.264), Irish (0.139), French (-0.002), and Low Countries and Austrian students (-0.003). According to pairwise comparisons, mean differences were significant between Greek students and South European ( $p < 0.000$ ,  $b = -601$ ), Low Countries and Austrian ( $p < 0.003$ ,  $b = 517$ ), French ( $p < 0.009$ ,  $b = 501$ ) and German students ( $p < 0.000$ ,  $b = 911$ ) but not with Irish and Scandinavian students. Significant differences were also found between German students and Low Countries and Austrian ( $p < 0.043$ ,  $b = -393$ ), French ( $p < 0.032$ ,  $b = -410$ ), Scandinavian ( $p < 0.000$ ,  $b = -697$ ), and Irish students ( $p < 0.002$ ,  $b = -626$ ). Moreover, significant were differences between South European and Scandinavian students ( $p < 0.041$ ,  $b = -388$ ).

In other words, Greek, Scandinavian and Irish students assign more importance to difficulties in accessing home higher education institutions in their choice to study abroad than students from other EU countries, notably Germany. It appears that the choice to study abroad relates to students' national context and particularly restrictive admission policies applied in certain national higher education systems. It appears that such a more 'forced' pattern of motives for study abroad relates mainly to Greek, Irish and Scandinavian students.

The difference of the estimated marginal means of factor 'Accessibility' between those studying in 'old' UK universities and those studying in 'new' UK universities is -0.242 and significant ( $p < 0.047$ ). Students studying in 'old' UK universities assign less importance to the difficulty in accessing home higher education institutions, in their

choice to study abroad, than students studying in 'new' UK universities. It appears that the higher the academic and social status of the institution abroad the less likely it is that the choice to study abroad relates to difficulties student faced in accessing higher education courses at home and, vice versa, the lower the status of the institution abroad the more likely it is that the choice to study abroad is associated with difficulties students faced in accessing at home their preferred courses or institutions, or higher education at all.

#### *Factor 5: Personal development*

Adjusted for covariates used in ANCOVA, factor 'Personal Development' was associated with parental education, sex, and age, and marginally not associated with subject studied. In particular, the estimated means of factor scores of those with one parent having higher education was 0.008, with no parent having higher education 0.006, and those with both parents with higher education was -0.268. The difference of the estimated marginal means of this factor between those students with no parent having higher education and those with one parent having higher education was -0.001 and not significant, while with those with both parents having higher education was 0.332 and significant ( $p < 0.022$ ). Significant were also mean differences between those students with one parent having higher education and those with both parents having higher education ( $p < 0.014$ ,  $b = 0.348$ ). The mean differences between those students with no parent having higher education and those with one parent having higher education was -0.001 but not significant.

That is, students of lower parental education assign more importance to the personal benefits and development with studying abroad. It again appears that student motives for study abroad relate to student's social status. It also appears that when the choice to study abroad is associated with upward social mobility students assign more importance to the personal benefits and development in studying abroad. It can, therefore, be argued that for students of a lower social status study abroad is more seen as a social strategy aimed at the acquisition of cultural capital (in the form of social dispositions) symbolically associated with those of a higher position such as broadening of horizons, personal independence, and a change of life.

The mean difference of factor 'Personal Development' between males and females was -0.267 and significant ( $p < 0.029$ ). That is, females assign more importance than males to personal reasons for studying abroad. It thus appears that gender relates to student motives for studying abroad. Gaining personal independence or changing life may be motives for choosing to study abroad of females more than males.

This factor was also associated with age of students ( $b = -0.005$ ,  $p < 0.007$ ). Younger students assign more importance to their personal development and independence in their choice to study abroad than older students.

Although the overall relationship of this factor with subject studied was not significant ( $p < 0.106$ ) significant differences were found between subject categories. Specifically, category Physics/Maths/Computer Science had the highest estimated mean of factor score (0.0311), followed by Social/Economic/Political Studies (0.177), Business and Administrative Studies (0.009), Engineering/Technology/Architecture (0.001), Language/Humanities/Arts (-0.132), Other (-0.166), (-0.225), and Law (-0.404). Physics/Maths/Computer Science subject category was significantly higher than categories Medicine/Allied Subjects ( $b = 0.537$ ,  $p < 0.035$ ) and Law ( $b = 0.715$ ,  $p < 0.22$ ) and marginally not significantly higher than Languages/Humanities/Arts ( $b = 0.443$ ,  $p < 0.053$ ) and Other ( $b = 0.477$ ,  $p < 0.056$ ). Social/Economic/Political Studies subject category was significantly higher than Law ( $b = 0.581$ ,  $p < 0.032$ ) and marginally not significantly associated with Medicine/Allied Subjects ( $b = 0.402$ ,  $p < 0.056$ ), Language/Humanities/Arts ( $b = 0.309$ ,  $p < 0.080$ ), and Other ( $b = 0.343$ ,  $p < 0.084$ ). Business and Administrative Studies was marginally not associated with Law ( $b = 0.501$ ,  $p < 0.086$ ).

That is, students studying Physics/Maths/Computer Science assign more importance to personal development reasons in their choice to study abroad than students studying particularly Medicine/Allied Subjects, and Law, and Other subjects. Similarly, students studying Social/Economic/Political Studies assign more importance to such reasons than those studying particularly Law, and slightly more than Medicine/Allied Subjects, Language/Humanities/Arts, and 'Other' subjects.

### *Factor 6: 'Home System Qualities'*

Factor 'Home System Qualities' was significantly associated with country of student origin ( $p < 0.000$ ), parental education, and subject group studied ( $p < 0.004$ ), adjusting for covariates used in ANCOVA. The relationship of this factor with country of student origin was strong ( $p < 0.000$ ). German students had the highest estimated mean (0.250), followed by French (0.214), and South European students. Irish students had the lowest mean (-0.823) of this factor. According to pairwise comparisons, mean differences were significant when Scandinavian students were compared with South European ( $p < 0.005$ ,  $b = -0.644$ ), German ( $p < 0.003$ ,  $b = -0.697$ ), and French students ( $p < 0.009$ ,  $b = -0.661$ ). Irish students had the lowest estimated mean (-0.005). This is due to the fact that this factor is also made by factor item English language that Irish students are native speakers of.

That is, Scandinavian students assign less importance in the choice to study abroad to qualitative characteristics of their home higher education system than South European, German, and French students. These differences may be attributed to the structural and qualitative differences among higher education systems and traditions in the EU. It appears that the less diverse the educational structures (between home and host country) the less the role they play in shaping student motives to study abroad.

Factor 'Home System Qualities' was also associated with student parental education. The estimated means difference between students with no parent with higher education and one parent with higher education was 0.421 and significant ( $p < 0.014$ ), and with students with both parents with higher education is 0.378 and significant ( $p < 0.014$ ). The mean difference between those students with one parent with higher education and those with both parents with higher education was -0.004 but not significant. That is, students with lower parental education assign more importance to the qualitative characteristics of home systems in their choice to study abroad. No clear interpretation for these differences was possible to find.

The relationship of this factor with subject group was strong ( $p < 0.004$ ). Subject group 'Languages/Humanities/Arts' had the highest estimated mean (0.417) and the mean

differences were significant when compared with 'Medicine/Allied Subjects' ( $b=0.610$  and  $p<0.008$ ), 'Social/Economic/Political Studies' ( $b=0.603$  and  $p<0.001$ ), 'Business Administration' ( $b=0.741$  and  $p<0.001$ ), and 'Law' ( $b=0.726$  and  $p<0.015$ ). That is, students studying 'Languages, Humanities, and Arts assign more importance in their choice to study abroad to home system characteristics than those studying 'Medicine/Allied Subjects'.

It thus appears that the role of the diversity of educational systems, structures and traditions, in the choice to study abroad relates to fields of study of students. These differences may be attributed to the degree of diversity across different fields of study across EU systems.

#### *Factor: Status of institution abroad*

This factor was strongly associated with type of UK university, adjusted for the covariates used in the model. Those studying in 'old' UK universities had a higher mean than those studying in 'new' UK universities and the mean difference was significant and strong ( $b=0.492$  and  $p<0.000$ ). That is, students studying in 'old' UK institutions assign more importance to the status of institutions than those studying in 'new' UK universities in their choice to study abroad. It thus appears that patterns of student motives for study abroad relate to the status and prestige of host higher education institutions. The higher the international status and prestige of host institution the more the importance assigned to the status and prestige of educational qualifications and studies in student choice to study abroad.

#### *Period of study abroad students*

Data reduction was performed with Principal Components Analysis (PCA) aimed at identifying patterns of correlations among reasons given by students for studying abroad for a period of study. A total of 22 variables were used in PCA procedure with 117 participants with valid answers.

## Factors that influence the choice to study abroad

As presented below in Table 6.21 five factors were extracted that (after rotation) account for 52.4% total variance explained<sup>6</sup>. Factors composed of two marking items (loading >0.400) although relatively poorly defined were kept due to the exploratory nature of this research.

**Table 6.21 Principal Component Analysis: Reasons for studying for a period abroad**

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Label</i>	<i>No of items</i>	<i>Eigenvalue</i>	<i>% of variance</i>
1	Labour market value and skills	5	3.2	14.7
2	Academic Experience	4	2.1	9.6
3	Delay study completion	3	1.6	7.4
4	Quality and status of study	2	1.5	7.2
5	Social experience	3	1.5	7.0
6	Personal development	2	1.3	6.2
				Total: 52.4%

Specifically, the first factor, contributing 14.7% of the variance, was composed of 5 items that involved perceptions concerning the acquisition of labour market skills such as international experience and English language proficiency, and improved job prospects. This factor was labelled 'Labour market value and skills'. The second factor, accounting for 9.6% of the total variance explained, composed of 4 items relating to academic experience gained through study abroad, such as different perspective on subject studied, teaching and learning methods, and foreign academic communities. This factor was labelled 'Academic Experience'. The third factor accounted for 7.4% of the variance, consisted of 3 items referring to student's desire to delay the completion of study and job entry. This factor was labelled 'Delay study completion'. The fourth factor, accounting for 7.2% of the total variance explained, was composed of 2 items, referring to the reputation and quality of institution abroad, and was labelled 'Status of Study'. The fifth factor, contributing 7% to the total variance explained, mainly consisted of 3 items referring to a particular interest in the UK, the improvement of language competence, and the cultural experience. This factor was labelled 'Social Experience'. Factor six, contributing 6.2 to the total

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<sup>6</sup> See above footnote 7.

variance explained, was composed of 2 items referring to increased personal independence and an interest in the city/town abroad. This factor was labelled 'Personal Development'. A test of independence of factors extracted (with Bivariate Correlation procedure) found no significant association.

### Analysis of Covariance

The next step taken was to examine the association of the factors extracted with several characteristics of the sample. Therefore, for each factor, Analysis of Covariance was performed with the following characteristics as independent variables.

Variables used in Analysis of Covariance:

#### **Factors:**

- 1. Country of origin:** Due to small sample country of student origin was grouped along with the categories used in the analysis for degree students, as follows: *South European* (Portugal, Italy, Spain, Greece) (n=23), *Low Countries* (Belgium, Netherlands) and *Austria* (n=17), *Scandinavian* (n=15), *French* (n=30), *Germany* (n=20). This grouping has largely followed grouping of degree students. No students from Ireland, however, participated in the sample.
- 2. Type of university.** Binary variable: '*old*' (n=73), '*new*' (n=32).
- 3. Sex.** Binary variable: *males* (n=32), *females* (n=73).
- 4. Level of mother education.** This variable was grouped in two categories: *mother without higher education* (n=60), *mother with higher education* (n=56).
- 5. Family socio-economic status (perceived).** Due to small number of participants categories 'below average' and 'low' were grouped together as follows: *high* (n=14), *above average* (n=38), *average* (n=38), *below average/low* (n=8).
- 6. Subject studied at home.** This variable was grouped as follows: *Sciences* (n=32), *Social Studies* (n=51), *Languages/Humanities/Arts* (n=22).
- 7. Mode of study period abroad.** Binary variable: *compulsory* (n=18), *optional* (n=87).
- 8. Main source of funding.** Binary variable: *self-financed* (n=68), *sponsored* (n=37).

**Covariates:****9. Age:** continuous**10. Index of family experience abroad:** continuous**11. Number of languages spoken:** continuous**12. Index of student prior experience abroad:** continuous**Results of ANCOVA**

Significant associations found with Analysis of Covariance are summarised below, in Table 6.22. It appears that patterns of student perceptions and motives for studying abroad for a period relate mainly to student parental education, sex, field of study, and source of finance.

**Table 6.22 Significant associations of factors for choosing to study for a period abroad**

Factor	Labour Market Value & Skills	Academic Experience	Delay Study Completion	Status of Study	Social experience	Personal development
Country of origin						
Type of institution					Mn	
Mother education	X					
Socio-economic status						
Sex		X			X	
Subject	X					
Mode of study					Mn	
Source of finance					X	
Age						
Family experience						
Languages						
Experiences abroad				Mn		

X = significant association, Mn = marginally non-significant

***Factor 1: Labour Market Value and Skills***

Factor 'Labour Market value and Skills' was significantly associated with mother education ( $p < 0.008$ ) and subject studied at home country institution, adjusted for the covariates used in the model. Specifically, the association of this factor with mother education was strong ( $p < 0.008$ ). Students with mother without having higher education had a higher mean (0.003) than students with mother having higher



education (-0.731). That is, those students with mother not having higher education assign more importance to labour market value and the acquisition of skills, in their choice to study abroad for a period, than students with mother having higher education. It appears that motives for study abroad relate to student cultural and social status. The choice to study abroad for a period for students of lower status is more associated with the acquisition of labour market skills and their upward social mobility. That is, when the study abroad for a period is associated with upward social mobility, more emphasis is assigned to the labour market value and the additional skills developed through studying and living abroad for a period.

Subject studied in home institution is only marginally not associated with this factor. In particular, those studying 'Social Sciences' had a higher estimated mean (-0.117) than those studying 'Sciences' (-0.007), and 'Languages/Humanities/Arts' (-0.858). According to pairwise comparisons mean differences were significant between 'Sciences' and 'Languages/Humanities/Arts' ( $b=0.741$ ,  $p<0.050$ ), between 'Social Sciences' and 'Languages/Humanities/Arts' ( $b=0.783$ ,  $p<0.020$ ). That is, students in Sciences assign more importance to the labour market value and the acquisition of skills than those in Languages/Humanities/Arts. Similarly, those studying Social sciences assign more importance to this factor than those studying Languages/Humanities/Arts. It appears that patterns of student motives for study abroad for a period relate to the field of study. These differences suggest that such international credentials are perceived more important for entry and development within certain labour market segments, career paths, and social domains.

### *Factor 2: Academic Experience*

Adjusted for covariates used in ANCOVA, factor 'Academic Experience' was significantly associated with sex ( $p<0.002$ ). Females had a higher estimated mean (0.169) than male students (-0.668). Female students assign more importance to the academic experience than male students in their choice to study abroad for a period. It appears that gender differences are in play in patterns of student motives for study abroad with females valuing more than males the academic experiences abroad.

It is also noteworthy, that although the overall relationship of this factor with student perceived socio-economic status was not significant, some significant differences between categories were found. Specifically, those students that stated their socio-economic status was 'high' had the highest mean (0.126), followed by stated 'above average' (0.002), 'average' (-0.136) and 'below average-low' (-0.966). Pairwise comparisons showed that the mean differences of those stated 'below average-low' were significant with those stated 'high' ( $b=1.092$ ,  $p<0.035$ ) and 'above average' ( $b=0.943$ ,  $p<0.038$ ), while with those stated 'average' mean differences were marginally not significant ( $b=-0.830$ ,  $p<0.051$ ). That is, the higher the perceived socio-economic status of students the more the importance assigned to the academic experience in their choice to study abroad for a period. It thus appears that patterns of motives for and perceptions of study abroad relate to student social status. Academic experience and knowledge abroad are valued higher by those of higher social status. It can, therefore, be argued that when the choice to study abroad is associated with maintaining students' high social position more emphasis is assigned to the academic experience abroad in student choice to study abroad .

#### *Factor 5: Social experience*

Factor 'Social Experience' was significantly associated with sex ( $p<0.044$ ) and source of finance ( $p<0.033$ ), adjusted for covariates used in the model. In particular, the association of this factor with sex was weak ( $p<0.044$ ). Female students had a higher mean (-0.134) than male students (-0.702) and the mean difference was  $b=0.568$ . That is, the female students assign more importance than male students to the social experience in their choice to study abroad. It can therefore be argued that gender differences are in play in student motives for study abroad for a period with females assigning more importance to the social experience and cultural communication abroad than males.

The association of this factor with source of funding was of medium strength ( $p<0.033$ ). Self-financed students had a higher estimated mean (-0.133) than those that their period of study abroad was sponsored (-0.702). That is, self- financed students assign more importance to the social experience than sponsored students. As,

however, the cost of studying and living abroad is generally high, we may argue that self-financed students are generally of higher social status than those their study abroad is sponsored. It can, therefore, be argued that students of higher social status assign more importance to the social experience and knowledge than those of lower status. That, is when the choice to study abroad is associated with maintaining students' social position more importance is assigned to the social experience and cultural communication and experiences abroad.

Factor 'Social Experience' was only marginally not associated with mode of period of study abroad (compulsory/optional). Specifically, the mean difference between those that the period of study is compulsory and those that it is optional was  $b=-0.628$  and  $p<0.060$ . An indication was found that students that their study period abroad is optional may assign more importance to the social experience of study abroad than those that study period abroad is a compulsory element of the course studied at home institution.

Similarly, this factor was only marginally not associated with type of UK university. The mean difference between 'old' and 'new' was  $b= 0.472$  and  $p<0.076$ . That is, an indication was found that students studying in 'old' and more prestigious UK universities may assign more importance to the social experience in their choice to study abroad for a period, than those studying in 'new' UK universities. That is, the status and prestige of host institutions relate to student motives for studying abroad for a period. Students studying for a period in more prestigious universities assign more importance to the social experience abroad than those studying in less prestigious universities.

No association was found of any of the variables used in the model and factors 'Delay study completion', 'Quality and status of institution abroad', and 'Personal Development'. Only exception to this was prior student experience abroad and factor 'Status of study' that were only marginally not associated ( $b=-0.222$ ,  $p<0.061$ ). That is, an indication was found that the more the prior experience abroad of students the less importance may be assigned to the academic and social status of the host institution in student choice to study abroad for a period.

It is also noteworthy, that although the relationship of factor 'Personal development' was not significantly associated with student socio-economic status, mean differences between some categories were only marginally not significant. Specifically, those stated that their socio-economic status was 'average' had the highest mean of this factor (-0.007) followed by those stated 'above average' (-0.109), 'high' (-0.344) and 'below average-low' (-0.972). Mean differences between those stated 'below average-low' and those stated 'above average' was  $b = -0.863$  and  $p < 0.079$  while with those stated 'average' was  $b = -0.863$  and  $p < 0.053$ . This factor was, however, made by two items related to the personal independence and the social experience of the city/town that the host institution is placed. That is, an indication was found that students of lower socio-economic status assign less importance, in their choice to study abroad, to their personal independence and development than those of higher socio-economic status.

## 5 The choice of the UK as the place to study abroad

Chapter Three of the Thesis has shown that the UK is the most popular destination country of EU students studying in another EU country. It has also shown that EU student demand for study in the UK is growing rather rapidly. This section seeks to shed light on the social factors involved in EU (non-UK) student choice of the UK as the place to study abroad for a degree or for a period of study. On the basis of the qualitative data analysis quantitative data were collected with the use of a questionnaire. In particular, the two groups of students (i.e. degree students and period of study abroad students) were given lists of different reasons students may have for selecting the UK as the place to study abroad. Students were also asked to rate the importance to them of each reason on a four-level scale (1= not at all important, 2= of some importance, 3= important, 4=very important). For those reasons that were not considered applicable to all students the option 0=not relevant was also given. A total of 35 such reasons were given to degree students and 23 reasons to period of study abroad students (see Appendix with instruments used).

## 6 Frequencies

### *Degree students*

Reasons given, by EU (non-UK) students, for selecting to study in the UK for a degree are given below in Table 6.23. Percentages represent those rating each reason as important/very important.

The most frequent reason rated important/very important by students was the course diversity in the UK and the wide range of options it provides students with in their selection of the place to study abroad. In particular, reason '*I found exactly the course I wanted to study in the UK*' was rated high by 68% students. Course diversity as a reason for choosing the UK as the place to study abroad is also given by 53.2% of students rating high reason '*I found the combination of subjects that I wanted to study in the UK*' in their choice of the UK.

**Table 6.23 Reasons for choosing to study in the UK for a degree: percentage rating each important/very important**

Reason	%	N
I found exactly the course I wanted to study in the UK	68.1	376
I thought that with a degree from the UK I would have better job prospects	60.7	382
I thought that the quality of UK institutions would be very good	58.2	383
I thought that a higher level of English proficiency would improve my job prospects <sup>7</sup>	53.5	381
I found the combination of subjects that I wanted to study in the UK	53.2	376
My English was better than any other foreign languages I know <sup>8</sup>	52.1	378
I wanted to study at an institution with an international reputation	49.6	379
I wanted to improve my English <sup>9</sup>	47.0	379
I thought that courses in the UK would prepare me well for the labour market	46.8	374
The UK is not far from home	39.9	381
I thought that contact with teachers in the UK would be good	39.6	376
I found it was easy to get information about courses in the UK	38.9	375
I wanted particularly to study at the university where I am at	38.5	382
I thought that the tutorial/seminar system would be good	38.2	369
I wanted to meet students from many countries	35.3	380
I had previously lived (or studied) in the UK	28.5	379
The admission process was simple	27.9	377
I thought that it would be easy to get onto my course in the UK	27.1	377
The admission process was fast	26.1	375
I liked the empirical academic tradition in the UK	23.9	377
I was living (or studying) in the UK	23.4	381
I thought that British people were friendly to foreign people	22.4	379
English was my only foreign language	19.3	383
I was particularly interested in British culture	18.7	380
I wanted to do a course that was short	18.1	376
I had friends in the UK	18.1	381
It seemed less expensive to study in the UK than elsewhere	14.1	376
Former teachers recommended that I study in the UK	13.5	378
I wanted my research to be supervised by a particular supervisor	13.5	377
Members of my family were living in the UK (or had previously lived in the UK)	11.5	383
My boyfriend/girlfriend was (or would also be) in the UK	11.2	384
My family wanted me to study in the UK	8.2	376
I thought that my course in the UK would be easy to complete	7.2	374
I thought that the weather would be good in the UK	1.0	378

Among the most frequent reasons rated highly were also the employment value of UK qualifications (*I thought that with a degree from the UK I would have better job prospects*, 60.7%, and *I thought that courses in the UK would prepare me well for the labour market*, 46.8%), the academic standing and status of UK institutions (*I thought that the quality of UK institutions would be very good*, 58.2%), the labour market value of English language proficiency (*I thought that a higher level of English proficiency would improve my job prospects*, 53.5%). It must, however, be noted that

<sup>7</sup> When Irish students were taken out this percentage was 60.8% (N=334)

<sup>8</sup> When Irish students were taken out this percentage was 58% (N=331)

<sup>9</sup> When Irish students were taken out this percentage was 53.5% (N=333)

the proportion of students rated highly this reason is 60.8% when Irish students are not counted. The restrictive role of English language in the choice of the UK is also evident in the high proportion of students (52.1%) that rated highly the reason '*My English was better than any other foreign languages I know*' (58% when Irish students are excluded), 47% reason '*I wanted to improve my English*' (53.5% when Irish students are excluded), and 19.3% reason '*English was my only foreign language*'. A significant minority (49.6%) of students rated highly the international status and prestige and international visibility of UK institutions (*I wanted to study at an institution with an international reputation*). Minorities of students rated also highly the geographical proximity of the UK (*The UK is not far from home*) with 39.9%, and the accessibility of UK higher education institutions, and particularly access to information and admission processes in UK universities. Specifically, reason '*I found it was easy to get information about courses in the UK*' was rated highly by 38.9%, '*The admission process was simple*' by 27.9%, '*I thought it would be easy to get onto my course in the UK*' by 27.1%, '*The admission process was fast*' by 26.1%.

Other minorities of students rated highly reasons related to other qualitative characteristics of the UK system such as teaching and learning methods (*I thought that contact with teachers in the UK would be good*, 39.6%, '*I thought that the tutorial/seminar system would be good*' 38.2%), the multicultural student population of UK institutions (*I wanted to meet students from many countries* 35.3%), the academic orientation and tradition (*I liked the empirical academic tradition in the UK*, 23.9%), and the length of courses (*I wanted to do a course that was short*, 18.1%). Prior experience and familiarity with the UK was also rated highly by about one fourth of students (*I had previously lived-or studied- in the UK*, 28.5%, '*I was living -or studying- in the UK*', 23.4%). Broader social reasons seem to have influenced the choice of some minorities of students. These include friendliness of British people (*I thought that British people were friendly to foreign people*, 22.4%), a social interest in British culture (*I was particularly interested in British culture*, 18.7%), personal relations and other acquaintances in the UK (*Members of my family were living in the UK - or had previously - lived in the UK*, 11.5%, '*My boyfriend/girlfriend was - or would also be - in the UK*', 11.2%, '*I had friends in the UK*', 18.1%). Small proportions of students rated highly the influence of family (*My family wanted me to study in the*

UK, 8.2%), former teachers (*Former teachers recommended that I study in the UK*, 13.5%), and the cost of study and living (*It seemed less expensive to study in the UK than elsewhere*, 14.1%). Over one -tenth rated highly a particular academic (*I wanted my research to be supervised by a particular supervisor*, 13.5%), and a small proportion rate highly the easiness of completion of courses in the UK (*I thought that my course in the UK would be easy to complete*, 7.2%).

The examination of frequencies of reasons for selecting the UK as the place to study for a degree abroad suggests that such a choice is mainly influenced by the size of the UK higher education system, the diversity of courses and the increased options it provides students with in meeting their study preferences. It also appears that students rate highly the employment value of UK qualifications, and particularly the employment value of English language competence. The important role of English language, in the selection of the UK, is also evident as i) over half of the students rated highly that their competence in English was higher than other foreign languages they had a command of, ii) almost half of students rated highly that they wanted to improve their English language competence, and iii) one-fourth of the students rated highly that English was the only foreign language they commanded. The choice of the UK is also influenced by the high position of the UK higher education system and institutions in the international hierarchy of higher education systems based on their academic standing, status, prestige, and international visibility.

Student choice of the UK is also influenced by the accessibility of UK institutions, and particularly, easily accessible information about courses and admissions processes in UK institutions. Other qualitative characteristics of the UK higher education system, such as teaching and learning methods, academic orientation, the multinational and multicultural composition of the student population, and the length of courses, that distinguish it from other higher education systems and educational traditions play also some role in directing students that choose to study abroad towards the UK.

Finally, broader social (i.e. no-strictly educational) reasons seem also to influence the selection of the UK as the place to study abroad. Such broader social reasons may



include the geographical proximity of the UK to other European countries, the cost of study and living in the UK (when compared with other countries and particularly the US), prior living or studying experience in the UK, interest in British culture and society, personal relations and acquaintances in the UK, and other influences (e.g. family).

### *Period of study abroad students*

Reasons given by students, for choosing the UK as the place to study for a period abroad are given below in Table 6.24. Percentages represent those rating each reason as important/vary important.

**Table 6.24 Reasons for choosing to study in the UK for a period: percentage rating each important/very important**

Reason	%	N
I wanted to improve my English	96.8	125
I thought that a higher level of English proficiency would improve my job prospects	82.0	122
I wanted to meet students from many different countries	68.0	125
My English was better than the other foreign languages that I know	50.8	124
I was particularly interested in British culture	45.6	125
I thought that the quality of UK institutions would be very good	43.2	125
I thought that the tutorial/seminar system would be good	43.1	123
I wanted to experience the British academic tradition	35.8	123
I wanted to study at an institution with international reputation	35.0	123
I wanted to explore the possibility for further study in the UK	32.8	122
It was simple to get into the UK institution	27.4	124
I particularly wanted to study at the university where I am at	22.6	124
I thought that British people were friendly to foreign people	20.3	123
I like the empirical academic tradition in the UK	19.7	122
The UK was close to my home country	15.3	124
English was my only foreign language	13.6	125
I had friends in the UK	11.2	125
I had previously lived in the UK	9.6	125
Members of my family were living (or had previously lived) in the UK	5.6	125
My boyfriend/girlfriend was (or would also be) in the UK	4.9	123
It seemed less expensive to study in the UK	3.4	117
I thought that the weather would be good in the UK	0.8	125

Almost all respondents (96.2%) rated the improvement of their English language competence as important/very important reason for choosing the UK as the place to study for a period. Over eight out of ten (82%) rated highly the employment value of English proficiency. The role of English language in the choice of the UK is further enhanced as a majority of students (52.9%) rated highly that their competence in English language was higher than other foreign languages that students have a command of. Moreover, a small minority (13.6%) rated highly in their choice that English was the only foreign language under their command. Over two out of three students (68%) rated the desire to meet students from many different countries. Significant minorities rated high a particular interest in British culture (45.6%), and certain qualitative characteristics of the UK higher education system such as, the quality of UK institutions (43.2%), the tutorial/seminar system (43.1%), the British academic tradition (35.8%), the international status of UK institutions (35%). Over one out of three rated highly the desire to explore the possibility of further study in the UK (32.8%).

The examination of frequencies of reasons for selecting the UK, given by students studying abroad for a period, provides evidence of the dominant role played by English language competence, its growing importance in international communication, and student entry into, and development within, labour markets, the hierarchies of occupations, and social hierarchies. It also appears that the choice of the UK is also influenced by the international composition of UK universities student population, and their international social status and prestige. As study abroad for a period is also associated with student interest in gaining academic and social experiences and knowledge, it appears that the choice of the UK is also influenced by qualitative characteristics of UK institutions such as teaching and learning methods, academic orientation, and an interest in British culture. Broader social or personal reasons seem also to play a role in student choice of the UK as the place to study abroad.

A comparison of the frequencies of reasons for selecting the UK as the place to study abroad given by degree and period of study abroad students shows that the factors involved and influence student choice are by large similar. It is also interesting to note

that period of study abroad students emphasise much more than degree students their desire to improve their English language competence and thus their labour market prospects. It appears that the choice to study in the UK for a period is primarily associated with student's desire to improve their English language competence together with their international social experience and knowledge.

It, thus, emerges that English language, and the high status and prestige of UK institutions and qualifications, along with the student perception of their value in the transition to the labour market, the hierarchy of occupations and the social hierarchy are dominant factors influencing student choice of the UK as the place to study for a degree or for a period.

Frequencies of reasons given by students also suggest that the accessibility of the UK system appears to play some role in student choice of the UK as the place to study abroad. It can, therefore be argued, that the expansion of the UK higher education system, and the use of competitive higher education funding mechanisms, have induced active marketing of UK higher education institutions and have made them more accessible to students abroad. Moreover, it appears that course diversification and modularisation in the UK system and the flexibility students are provided with in combining different subjects and modules seem to influence student choices of the UK as the place to study abroad.

Finally, qualitative structural characteristics of the UK higher education system play some role in student choices of place to study abroad. Such characteristics appear to include the educational tradition and academic orientation, teaching and learning methods used and, particularly, the tutorial and seminar system, and the length of courses. It also seems that the long tradition of UK universities in receiving European and other international students makes them international in the composition of their student population and provide mobile students with a more tolerant social environment and enriches their social and learning experience. Such factors appear to also account for the choice of the UK as the place to study abroad.

## 7 Principal Components Analysis and Analysis of Covariance

The next steps taken in the exploration and analysis of the factors involved in student choice of the UK as the place to study abroad was to reduce data with Principal Component Analysis and search for relationships with several characteristics of students with Analysis of Covariance. (For more details on methodological rationale employed see respective section of analysis for reasons for choosing to study abroad)

### *Degree students*

Data reduction was performed with Principal Components Analysis (PCA) in order to identify possible underlying processes and patterns of correlations among reasons given by students for choosing the UK as the place to study for a degree abroad. A total of 24 variables were used in factor procedure with 344 participants with valid answers.

Factors extracted that influence the choice of the UK as the place to study abroad

As presented below (Table 6.25) five factors were extracted that summarise students reasons for choosing the UK as the place to study abroad, with total variance explained 50.5%<sup>10</sup>. Specifically, the first factor, contributing 12.5 percent of the variance, was composed of 5 items that refer to the process of accessing UK institutions, such as simple, fast and 'easy' admission processes, and easily accessible information about courses and institutions.

Factor 1 was labelled 'Accessibility of UK Institutions'. Factor 2, contributing 10,08 percent of the variance, was also composed of 6 items involving qualitative system characteristics such as the tutorial/seminar system, contact with teachers, empirical tradition, quality of institutions, the British culture. This factor was called 'Qualitative System Characteristics'. Factor 3 was composed of 5 items relating to the

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<sup>10</sup> See above footnote 7.

international reputation, quality, and the labour market value of UK degrees. This factor was named 'Status of UK System'.

Factor 4, explaining 10.8 of the variance, was composed of 4 items, mainly relating to English language and its labour market value. This factor was named 'English language value'. Finally, factor 5, was composed of 3 items primarily referring to the diversity of study programmes in the UK, and was named 'Course diversity'. Factors extracted were subsequently tested for their independence (with Bivariate Correlation procedure). No significant correlations were found which suggests a satisfactory degree of independence of factors extracted.

**Table 6.25 Principal Component Analysis: Reasons for selecting the UK as the place to study abroad for a degree**

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Label</i>	<i>No of items</i>	<i>Eigenvalue</i>	<i>% of variance</i>
1	System Accessibility	5	3.3	13.7
2	Qualitative System Characteristics	7	2.5	10.6
3	Social Status of UK System	5	2.5	10.6
4	English Language Value	4	2.0	8.7
5	Course Diversity	3	1.6	6.6
				Total: 50.5%

### Analysis of Covariance with ANCOVA

The next step taken in the exploration of the social factors influencing the choice of the UK as the place to study for a degree abroad, was to examine the association of the factors extracted with several characteristics of the sample. Therefore, for each factor, Analysis of Covariance was performed. The variables used in the model were those also used in the Analysis of Covariance of factors influencing the choice to study abroad. The results obtained are summarised below in Table 6.26. It appears that patterns of student motives for selecting the UK as the place to study abroad relate to student country of origin, status of institution abroad, sex, field of study, source of finance, and family experience abroad.

**Table 6.26 Significant associations of factors for selecting the UK as the place to study for a degree abroad**

Factor	UK system accessibility	UK system qualities	Social status of UK system	English language value	Course diversity
Country of origin		X	X	X	
Type of institution	X		X		
Mother education					Mn
Socio-economic status					
Sex			X		Mn
Subject					
Mode of study	X		X	X	
Source of finance			Mn	X	
Age					
Family experience				Mn	
Languages					
Experiences abroad	X			X	
			Mn		

X = significant association, Ms = marginally significant, Mn = marginally non-significant

#### *Factor 1: 'UK System Accessibility'*

Adjusted for covariates used in ANCOVA, factor 'UK System Accessibility' was significantly associated with type of UK university ( $p < 0.024$ ), subject studied ( $p < 0.017$ ), and family experience abroad ( $p < 0.033$ ).

In particular, the estimated marginal mean of those studying in 'new' universities was higher (0.250) than those studying in 'old' UK universities (-0.008). The mean difference was  $b = -0.339$  and the relationship of medium strength ( $p < 0.024$ ). That is, students studying in 'new' and less prestigious UK universities assign more importance to the accessibility of the UK system in their choice of the UK as the place to study abroad than those studying in 'old' and more prestigious UK universities. It can, therefore, be argued that the choice of the UK as the place to study abroad may be influenced by the accessibility of- particularly- less prestigious UK universities. Such a student perception may be attributed to the fact that less prestigious UK universities

are less sought after by students and, therefore, more active in marketing activities, and adjusted admissions processes.

This factor was also strongly associated with subject studied ( $p < 0.017$ ). 'Medicine/Allied Subjects' group had the highest mean followed by 'Business Administration' and 'Physics/Maths/Computer Science'. Pairwise comparisons showed that the estimated mean of 'Medicine/Allied Subjects' was significantly higher than 'Engineering/Technology/Architecture' ( $b = 0.545$ ,  $p < 0.040$ ), 'Social/Economic/Political studies' ( $b = 0.679$ ,  $p < 0.003$ ), 'Languages/Humanities/Arts' ( $b = 0.782$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and 'Other' ( $b = 0.685$ ,  $p < 0.007$ ). Significant was also the mean difference between 'Business Administration' and 'Languages/Humanities/Arts' ( $b = 0.503$ ,  $p < 0.023$ ).

That is, students studying Medicine and Allied Subjects assign more importance to the accessibility of the UK system, in their choice of the UK, than those studying Engineering, Technology, Architecture, Social, Economic and Political Studies, Languages, Humanities, Arts. Similarly, those studying Business and Administrative studies assign more importance to the accessibility of the UK system than other subjects, notably Languages, Humanities, Arts. It can, therefore, be argued that the choice of the UK may be influenced by perceptions of system accessibility particularly in certain subjects including mainly Medicine/Allied subjects and Business and Administrative studies. These differences may be best attributed to the role played by restrictive admissions to such subjects across EU countries or the incompatibility between student demand and higher education provision

Family experience abroad was also associated with this factor ( $p < 0.033$ ,  $b = -0.007$ ). For one level increase of the index of family experiences abroad, factor scores decreases by 0.007. That is, the more the family experiences abroad the less importance is assigned to the accessibility of the UK system as a reason to choose the UK as the place to study.

## *Factor 2: Qualitative UK System Characteristics*

Factor 'Qualitative UK System Characteristics' was only associated with country of student origin ( $p < 0.000$ ), adjusted for covariates used in the ANCOVA model. German students had a higher estimated mean (0.534), followed by students from Low Countries and Austria (0.159), while Irish (-0.773) and Scandinavian (-0.750) students had the lowest estimated mean. According to pairwise comparisons, the mean difference of German students was significant with South European ( $b = 0.535$ ,  $p < 0.010$ ), French ( $b = 0.581$ ,  $p < 0.012$ ), Scandinavian ( $b = 1.284$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ), Irish ( $b = 1.307$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ), and Greek students ( $b = 0.454$ ,  $p < 0.039$ ). Significant were also the mean differences when students from Low Countries and Austria were compared with Scandinavian ( $b = 0.909$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ) and Irish students ( $b = 0.932$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ), when French students were compared with Scandinavian ( $b = 0.703$ ,  $p < 0.005$ ), and Irish students ( $b = 0.726$ ,  $p < 0.004$ ). Moreover, significant were mean differences when South European students were compared with Scandinavian ( $b = 0.749$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and Irish students ( $b = 0.772$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ); when Greek students were compared with Scandinavian ( $b = 0.830$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ), and Irish students ( $b = 0.853$ ,  $p < 0.000$ ). That is, German students assign more importance, in their choice of the UK, to certain qualitative characteristics of the UK higher education system than South European (Portuguese, Italian, Spanish), Greek, French, Scandinavian (Swedish, Danish, Finish), and Irish students. Belgian, Dutch, Luxembourgian, and Austrian students assign more importance to the qualitative characteristics of the UK system than Scandinavian and Irish students; French students more than Scandinavian and Irish students; South European (Italian, Spanish, Portuguese) and Greek students more than Scandinavian and Irish students.

It thus appears that the choice of the UK is influenced by the diversity of European higher education systems, and the educational contexts in the student country of origin. It can, therefore, be argued that the qualitative characteristics of UK universities play a more important role in the choice of students from countries with more diverse systems than the UK and a less important role in the choice of students from countries with more similar structures and traditions to the UK system.



It is also noteworthy that although subject group studied was not overall significantly associated with factor 'Qualitative System Characteristics ', significant differences were found between certain categories of subjects. Social/Economic/Political Studies and Languages/Humanities/Arts had the highest estimated mean (both with 0.007), followed by Business Administrative Studies (0.000), Medicine/Allied subjects (-0.005), 'Other' (-0.131), Physics/Maths/Computer Science, (-0.197), Law (-0.241), and Engineering/Technology/Architecture (-0.432). Pairwise comparisons showed that estimated marginal mean of 'Engineering/ Technology/Architecture' was significantly lower than 'Social/ Economic/Political studies' ( $b=0.511$ ,  $p<0.021$ ) and 'Languages/ Humanities/Arts' ( $b=-0.506$ ,  $p<0.027$ ), and marginally not significantly different from 'Business Administration' ( $b=-0.423$ ,  $p<0.065$ ). That is, students studying 'Social/Economic/Political studies' and 'Languages/ Humanities/Arts' assign more importance to the qualitative characteristics of the UK higher education system than those studying 'Engineering/Technology/Architecture' in their choice of the UK. It can, therefore, be argued that students in social studies seem to value higher in their choice the qualitative characteristics of the UK system. These differences may be attributed to the degree of diversity of structures, traditions and courses across fields of study in EU higher education systems. Such differences may also to some extent represent different 'cultures' of students studying in different subjects.

#### *Factor 2: Status of UK system*

This factor was associated (adjusted for covariates used) with country of student origin ( $p<0.003$ ), type of university ( $p<0.001$ ), sex ( $p<0.013$ ), and subject studied ( $p<0.009$ ). It was also marginally not significant with source of finance.

Specifically, the relationship of this factor with country of student origin was strong ( $p<0.003$ ). Greek students had the highest estimated mean of factor 'Social Status of UK System' (0.268), followed by South European (0.176), and Scandinavian students (-0.001). French (-0.383) students and students from Low Countries and Austria (-0.316) had the lowest estimated means. When pairwise comparisons were examined, significant estimated mean differences were found when Greek students were compared with Low Countries and Austrian students ( $b=0.584$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), French

( $b=0.651$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), German ( $b=0.427$ ,  $p<0.027$ ), and Irish students ( $b=0.504$ ,  $p<0.013$ ). Significant were also mean differences between South European students and Low Countries and Austrian ( $b=0.492$ ,  $p<0.008$ ), French ( $b=0.558$ ,  $p<0.004$ ), and Irish students ( $b=0.411$ ,  $p<0.44$ ). That is, Greek students assign more importance in the status of the UK system in their choice of place to study abroad than Belgian-Dutch-Luxembourgian-Austrian students, French, and Irish students. Similarly, South European (Italian, Spanish, Portuguese) students assign more importance to the status and prestige in their choice of the UK than students from Low Countries and Austria. It can, therefore, be argued that the choice of the UK as the place to study for a degree is influenced by the social and educational context of the student country of origin and relates to the international hierarchy of higher education systems in the EU. Students from countries with a lower status higher education system, in the international hierarchy of higher education systems, assign more importance to the international status and prestige of the UK system and institutions in their choice of the UK as the place to study abroad.

The relationship of this factor with the type of UK university was strong ( $p<0.001$ ). Students studying in 'old' UK universities had a higher mean (0.107) than those studying in 'new' UK universities and the mean difference was  $b=0.404$ . Students studying in 'old' UK universities assign more importance to the social status and prestige in their choice of the UK as the place to study abroad than those studying in 'new' UK universities. These differences seem to reflect more the internal stratification of UK universities based on their international academic standing and social prestige. It can, therefore, be argued that the international social status and prestige of the UK system is due more to the status of 'old' UK universities.

The relationship of this factor with sex was also strong ( $p<0.013$ ). Male students had a higher mean (0.004) of this factor than female students (-0.234) and the mean difference was  $b=0.277$ . That is, male students assign more importance than female students to the social status of the UK higher education system in their choice to study in the UK. These gender differences may reflect the higher emphasis males assign to their professional career than females in their educational choices and the place to study abroad.

The relationship of this factor with subject group studied was also strong ( $p < 0.009$ ). 'Law' subject group had the highest estimated mean, followed by 'Social/Economic/Political studies'. When pairwise comparisons were examined 'Law' was significantly different from 'Medicine/Allied Subjects' ( $b = 0.835$ ,  $p < 0.002$ ), 'Physics/Maths/Computer Science' ( $b = 0.652$ ,  $p < 0.018$ ) 'Engineering/Technology/Architecture' ( $b = 0.644$ ,  $p < 0.015$ ), 'Business Administration' ( $b = 0.514$ ,  $p < 0.045$ ), 'Languages/Humanities/Arts' ( $b = 0.857$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), 'Other' ( $b = 0.626$ ,  $p < 0.020$ ). 'Social/Economic/Political studies' was significantly different from 'Medicine/Allied Subjects' ( $b = 0.482$ ,  $p < 0.011$ ) and 'Languages/Humanities/Arts' ( $b = 0.504$ ,  $p < 0.002$ ). That is, students studying Law in the UK assign more importance to the social status and prestige in their choice of the UK than those studying Medicine/Allied subjects, Physics/Maths/Computer science, Engineering/Technology/Architecture, Business Administration, Languages/Humanities/Arts, and 'Other' subjects. Similarly, those studying Social/Economic/Political studies assign more importance to this factor than those studying 'Medicine/Allied subjects, and Languages/Humanities/Arts.

That is, the importance assigned to the status of the UK system, in the student choice of the UK as the place to study abroad relates to the fields of study. It, thus, appears that country-subject hierarchies are in play and influence student choice of the UK as the place to study abroad. Specifically, it emerges that the UK is perceived of higher social status and prestige in certain subjects, namely, Law and the Social, Economic and Political Studies.

#### *Factor 4: English Language Value*

Factor 'English Language' was significantly associated (adjusted for covariates) with country of student origin ( $p < 0.000$ ), subject studied ( $p < 0.0120$ ), source of finance ( $p < 0.037$ ), and family experience abroad.

The association of this factor with country of student origin was strong ( $p < 0.000$ ). French students had the highest estimated mean (0.500), followed by German (0.329), Scandinavian (0.243), and Low Countries and Austrian students (0.201). Irish (-0.763) and Greek (-0.306) and South European (0.000) students had the lowest estimated

mean of this factor. According to pairwise comparisons, significant mean differences were found when French students were compared with South European ( $b=0.494$ ,  $p<0.004$ ), Greek ( $b=0.806$ ,  $p<0.000$ ) and Irish students ( $b=1.264$ ,  $p<0.000$ ); when German students were compared with South European ( $b=0.323$ ,  $p<0.043$ ), Greek ( $b=0.634$ ,  $p<0.000$ ), and Irish students ( $b=1.092$ ,  $p<0.000$ ). Significant were also mean differences between students from Low Countries and Austria and Greek students ( $b=0.606$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), between Scandinavian and Greek students ( $b=0.549$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), and between South European and Greek students ( $b=0.311$ ,  $p<0.046$ ).

That is, French students assign more importance to the English language labour market value in their choice of the UK than South European students (Portuguese, Italian, Spanish), Greek and Irish students. Similarly, German students assign more importance to this factor than South European (Portuguese, Italian, Spanish), Greek, and Irish students; Belgian, Dutch, Luxembourgian and Austrian students assign more importance to English language labour marker value than Greek students. It, appears that student perceptions of, and motives for choosing the UK relate to students' country of origin and, particularly, to the position of the home country higher education system in the international hierarchy of systems. Students from countries with higher status higher education systems assign more importance in their choice of the UK to the labour market value of English language than those of countries with a higher education system of a lower position in the international hierarchy of systems. It, therefore, emerges that when high status qualifications can well be obtained at home the choice of the UK is associated with students desire to acquire English language skills for their successful entry into and development within labour markets and social hierarchies.

The association of this factor with subject studied was strong ( $p<0.012$ ). Specifically, students studying 'Engineering/Technology/Architecture' had the highest estimated mean (0.359) followed by 'Business and Administrative studies' (0.232) and 'Law' (0.140). Those studying Physics/Maths/Computer science had the lowest estimated mean (-0.299) together with those studying Languages/Humanities/Arts (-0.143). According to pairwise comparisons, mean differences of Engineering/Technology /Architecture subject group were significant when compared with Medicine/Allied

subjects ( $b=0.426$  and  $p<0.028$ ), Physics/Maths/Computer science ( $b=0.658$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), Social/Economic/Political studies ( $b=0.389$ ,  $p<0.023$ ), Languages/Humanities/Arts ( $b=0.502$ ,  $p<0.005$ ). Mean differences were also significant when Business and Administrative studies were compared with Physics/Maths/Computer science ( $b=0.268$ ,  $p<0.004$ ), and Languages/Humanities /Arts ( $b=0.375$ ,  $p<0.021$ ).

That is, students studying Engineering/Technology/ Architecture assign more importance to English language learning in their choice of the UK than those studying Medicine/Allied subjects, Physics/Maths/Computer science, Social/Economic/Political studies, and Languages/Humanities/Arts. Similarly, those studying Business and Administrative studies assign more importance to English language learning than those studying Physics/Maths/Computer science, and Languages/Humanities /Arts. It thus appears that the role assigned to the labour market value of English language in student choice of the UK relates to the field of study. Students studying in fields of study that relate to more 'internationalised' labour market domains assign more importance to the labour market value of English language in their choice of the UK as the place to study abroad.

Factor 'English Language value' was associated with source of finance. In particular, those students whose studies were sponsored have a higher estimated mean (0.140) than those that were self-financed (-0.008). The mean difference ( $b=0.221$ ) was significant ( $p<0.037$ ). That is, students whose studies were sponsored assign more importance to the labour market value of English language in their choice of the UK than self-financed students. As, however, the cost of studying and living in the UK is rather high, we may take that self-financed students are generally of higher family socio-economic background than sponsored students. We can then argue that the lower the socio-economic status of students the more the importance is assigned to the labour market value of English language in their choice of the UK.

#### *Factor 5: Course Diversity*

Adjusted for covariates, factor 'Course Diversity' was marginally not associated with parental education ( $p<0.082$ ) and sex ( $p<0.082$ ). Specifically, students with both

parents having higher education had a higher mean (0.184) than those students with one parent having higher education (0.009). Those students with no parent having higher education had the lowest estimated mean (-0.136).

That is, an indication was found that the diversity of courses and institutions in the UK system and the wide range of options and flexibility it provides students with may relate to students cultural background in their choice to study in the UK. The higher the cultural background (measured at parental education level) of students, the more the internal diversity of the UK higher education system is appreciated in the selection of the UK as the place to study abroad.

It is also noteworthy that although subject group studied was not significantly associated with factor 'Course Diversity' the estimated marginal mean of 'Other' and 'Languages/Humanities/ Arts' subject group categories were the highest (with 0.360, and 0.158 respectively), and 'Medicine/Allied Subjects' the lowest (with -0.285). Significant mean differences were found of 'Medicine/Allied subjects with 'Other' ( $b=0.644, p<0.005$ ) and with 'Languages/Humanities/ Arts' ( $b=0.442, p<0.037$ ).

That is, students studying Medicine/Allied subjects assign less importance to the course diversity of the UK higher education system than those studying 'Languages/Humanities/ Arts' and 'Other' subjects (including mainly courses combining subjects). These differences may reflect the rigidity of curricula in certain fields and particularly in Medicine and Allied Subjects They may also be attributed to the fact that the choice to study abroad Medicine is generally associated with difficulties students face in accessing such socially prestigious and, therefore, competitive courses. Study abroad in such cases is a more 'forced' process than one based on choice between different options.

#### *Period of study abroad students*

Data reduction was performed with Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with a view to identify possible underlying processes based on patterns of correlations among

reasons given by students for choosing the UK as the place to study abroad for a period. A total of 14 variables were used in PCA procedure with 114 participants with valid answers.

Factors that influence the choice of the UK as the place to study for a period abroad

As presented below (Table 6.27) three factors were extracted that account for 39,7% of the variance<sup>11</sup>. Specifically, the first factor contributing 17.2% to the total variance explained, consisted of 6 items referring to qualitative characteristics of the UK higher education system, such as the international reputation, academic tradition, and quality of institutions. This factor was labelled 'Status of UK system'. The second factor, accounting for 12% of the total variance explained was composed of 3 items mainly relating to student interest in undertaking further study in UK universities and the improvement of English language proficiency. This factor was labelled 'Interest in further study in the UK'. The third factor, accounting for 10.4% of the total variance explained, consisted of 2 items mainly relating to student social interest in British culture. This factor was labelled 'Social interest in British culture'. A Bivariate Correlations procedure found no significant associations of factors extracted that suggests a high degree of independence among factors.

**Table 6.27 Principal Component Analysis: Reasons for selecting the UK as the place to study for a period.**

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Label</i>	<i>No of items</i>	<i>Eigenvalue</i>	<i>% of variance</i>
1	Status of UK system	6	2.1	17, 2
2	Interest in further study	5	1.6	12,0
3	Social interest in British culture	4	1.3	10, 4
				Total: 39.7%

<sup>11</sup> See above footnote 7.

## Analysis of Covariance

The next step taken in the exploration of the social factors influencing the choice to study in the UK for a period was to examine the association of the factors extracted with several characteristics of the sample.

**Table 6.28 Significant associations of factors for selecting the UK as the place to study for a period abroad**

Factor	Status of UK system	Interest in further study	Social interest in British culture
Country of origin		X	X
Type of university			
Mother Education			
Socio-economic status			
Sex		Mn	X
Subject			
Mode of study			
Source of finance			X
Age	X		
Family experience			
Languages			
Prior experiences abroad	X		Mn

Key: X = significant association, Mn = marginally non-significant

Therefore, for each factor, Analysis of covariance was performed. (For background variables used in the model see above Analysis of Covariance of factors for study abroad for a period). Significant associations found are summarised in Table 6.28 above. It appears that patterns of student motives for selecting the UK as the place to study abroad for period relate to the country of student origin, source of finance, age, and student prior experience abroad.

### *Factor 1: Status of UK system*

Adjusted for covariates used in the model, factor 'Status of UK system' was significantly associated with age ( $p < 0.027$ ) and prior student experience abroad ( $p < 0.001$ ). In particular, for each year of age increase factor score increases (0.121). *That is, more mature students assign more importance to the status of the UK system than younger students.* For each level of increase of the index of student experience



abroad factor score decreases (-0.374). That is, the more the prior student experience abroad the less the importance assigned to the status of the UK system.

### *Factor 2: Interest in further study in the UK*

Adjusted for covariates used in the model, factor 'Interest in further study in the UK' was significantly associated with country of student origin and marginally not associated with sex. Specifically, the association of this factor with country of student origin was strong ( $p < 0.010$ ). South European students (Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, Greek) had a higher mean (0.393) of factor score. According to pairwise comparisons the mean difference of South European students was significant with Low Countries and Austrian students ( $b = 0.986$ ,  $p < 0.004$ ), Scandinavian ( $b = 0.848$ ,  $p < 0.024$ ), French ( $b = 0.958$ ,  $p < 0.002$ ), and German students ( $b = 0.793$ ,  $p < 0.019$ ).

That is, the choice to study in the UK for a period with the view to explore possibilities for further study in the UK relates to the country of student origin and the position of the home higher education system in the international hierarchy of systems. Students from countries with a lower status higher education system assign more importance to the exploration of possibilities for undertaking further studies in the UK in their choice of the UK as the place to study for a period. It may also, however, relate to the fact that in some European countries postgraduate education systems are less developed or recently established and, therefore, not yet expanded to meet student needs. This is more the case of higher education systems of particularly South European countries.

### *Factor 3: Social interest in British culture*

Adjusted for covariates, factor 'Social interest in British culture' was significantly associated with country of student origin, sex, source of finance, and marginally not significant with prior student experience abroad. Specifically, the association of this factor with country of student origin was strong ( $p < 0.007$ ). Students from Low Countries and Austria had the highest estimated mean of factor score (0.283), and South European students (Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, Greek) had the lowest

estimated mean (-1.011). According to pairwise comparisons the mean difference of Low Countries and Austrian students was significant when compared with South European students ( $b=1.294$ ,  $p<0.000$ ). Mean differences were also significant when South European students were compared with French ( $b=-0.696$ ,  $p<0.024$ ) and German students ( $b=-0.764$ ,  $p<0.026$ ). That is, South European students (Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, Greek) assign less importance to the social interest in British culture, in their choice to study in the UK for a period, than French, German, Belgian, Dutch, and Austrian students. It thus appears that the choice of the UK relates to student country of origin. Students from countries with higher status of higher education system in the international hierarchy of systems assign more importance to the social interest in British culture in their choice to study in the UK for a period.

Female students had a higher estimated mean of factor score (-0.004) than male students (-0.600) and the mean difference ( $b=-0.559$ ) was significant ( $p<0.032$ ). That is, female students assign more importance to the social interest in British culture than male students in their choice to study in the UK for a period. This may again be attributed to the stronger emphasis females assign to the social experience abroad.

Self-financed students had a higher estimated mean of factor score (-0.007) than sponsored students (-0.564) and the mean difference ( $b=0.487$ ) was significant ( $p<0.039$ ). That is, self-financed students assign more importance to the social interest in British culture than sponsored students in their choice to study in the UK for a period. As it has been argued above, self-financed students come generally from better-off families. It can therefore be argued that the higher the socio-economic status of students the higher the importance assigned to their social interest in the British culture.

This factor was marginally not associated with prior student experience abroad ( $p<0.099$ ). For each level of increase in the index of prior student experience abroad, factor score decreases (-0.179). That is, an indication was found that the more the prior student experience abroad the less the importance assigned in the social interest in British culture, in student choice to study in the UK for a period.

## **Summary of main findings**

This chapter has examined quantitative data on EU student motives (reasons given) for choosing to study abroad and selecting the UK. It has found that patterns of student reasons relate mainly to their country of origin, social background, field of study, status of institution abroad, and gender. The next chapter discusses main findings and develops the hypothesis they support.

## **Chapter Seven**

### **Discussion of main findings and conclusions of the Thesis**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose set for this investigation was to contribute to our understanding of the social dynamics of student mobility in the EU. In the context of this research student mobility has been approached as a social process forming part of the wider process of higher education internationalisation in the European Union. Student mobility and higher education internationalisation have a rather global dimension. This research, however, adopting an EU focus has placed the process of higher education internationalisation and student mobility in the EU in the broader process of European social integration. In the context of this research European social integration refers to the growing process of closer interaction and rapprochement of European social actors and social systems. Specifically, this research has approached the process of higher education internationalisation and student mobility as social actions by which a European educational and social space is being created within which new relations of power and competition, conflict and intersection emerge. The research has sought to shed light on the social factors involved that influence such social action, and the social characteristics of the European educational and social space.

Under such conceptual lenses, EU mobile students have been approached as social agents of the higher education internationalisation process, the European educational space, and European social integration. Chapter Three of the Thesis has shown that the number of students from EU countries studying in another EU country is on the increase. It has also shown that, over the last two decades, a change of direction of student flows towards the UK has occurred, and the UK is currently the most popular destination country among EU students studying in another EU country. Two main types of student mobility have been identified. Students studying in a country other than their own with a view to obtain a degree abroad, and students studying abroad for

a shorter period of time within some institutional agreement or under some other type of arrangement.

The point of departure of this investigation has been Mouzelis' theoretical synthesis that social action takes place within a context of institutional and social hierarchies by collective or individual social actors with unequal resources at their disposal. Social actors struggle to increase some type of 'capital' (economic, political, social, cultural) that are unequally distributed among them. The structuration of the European educational space is a process involving actions of actors with unequal resources at their disposal, acting at different levels, i.e. European, national, institutional. Such superordinate actors, acting at macro or meso level, seeking to increase or maintain some type of capital, set limits and restrictions or provide opportunities to subordinate actors. This research has particularly focused on students, as subordinate actors, and sought to understand the social factors influencing their choice and action to study in a country other than their own. The focus on students, has been made on the assumption that the European educational space is created when limits and, particularly, opportunities set by superordinate actors are taken up by students. Therefore, in a background of growing student mobility, this research has examined students' perceptions and has sought to examine how such an educational choice and action increases student's cultural capital (in the form of educational qualifications). Educational choices and actions in a social context of mass higher education systems relate to students' aspirations in the social competition for successful entry into and development within, the labour market, the hierarchy of occupations and social hierarchies. Furthermore, it has been taken that in the social context of growing globalisation and European integration, national economies, societies, and labour markets become more international.

This investigation has focused on the stage of educational choice formation and has taken the case of students from different EU countries studying in UK universities. The UK case has been chosen since it is the most popular destination country among EU students studying in another EU country (and a major mobile student destination at a global level). The research has focused on two groups of EU (non-UK) students. The first group were students studying in the UK with a view to obtain a degree from a UK university. The second group were students studying in the UK for a period of

study within ERASMUS, the EU-funded student exchange programme, or under another arrangement. In particular, this research has examined student motives and perceptions (in the form of 'reasons' given) for i) choosing to study in a country other than their own, and ii) choosing, in particular, the UK as the place to study abroad. Such motives and perceptions by which interpretation of conduct by social actors proceeds have been considered as social phenomena that can be analysed and explained.

Therefore, the research questions investigated in this research have been as follows: How and why such educational and social choices and actions increase the cultural capital of students from different EU countries seeking to improve their chances for successful social integration in social hierarchies? How does the specific choice of the UK as the place to study abroad, contribute to the social aspirations of students from different EU countries?

To what extent there exist educational hierarchies across EU higher education systems and institutions and what are the social criteria for such stratification of systems and institutions? To what extent and how do massification of higher education systems, the diversity of EU higher education systems, and the internationalisation of national economies and societies influence student's perceptions and educational choices?

This research has also sought to examine the role played by policies developed by superordinate (European, national, institutional) actors setting limits and providing opportunities to students. It has also sought to investigate how the social dynamics of student mobility relate to the existing multi-level policy context in the EU?

Student mobility results from educational choices that transcend nationally organised social and educational systems and effect in the creation of a European educational space. Therefore, this research has also examined the social characteristics of, and emerging relationships within, the European educational space and seeks to analyse how such characteristics and relationships relate to students' aspirations for successful social integration and social mobility.

The research was initiated in a background of little theoretical development on the social factors influencing student choice to study abroad and the social dynamics of student mobility in the EU. Therefore, an exploratory perspective was employed and guided the collection and analysis of empirical data collected. Inductive analysis of empirical evidence collected, and the main findings obtained, were subsequently linked with recent theoretical advances on social action and educational choices and evidence-based theoretical hypotheses/arguments have been formulated. This inductive and deductive approach to theory building has enabled the formulation of theoretically informed and evidence-based theory for student mobility in the EU. Such theoretical formulations/hypotheses seek specifically to contribute to our understanding of the social dynamics and characteristics of student mobility, the internationalisation of higher education, the construction of the European educational space, and European social integration.

#### *Data collection methods used*

For the collection of empirical data, both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed and linked. Specifically, qualitative data were collected with semi-structured interviews with students from different EU countries, studying in UK universities, for a degree or for a shorter period of study. The findings of qualitative data were used to inform the design of a questionnaire that was subsequently sent to a larger number of students. Student interviews also informed the analysis of quantitative data obtained. This methodological approach was selected in order to reduce the weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative methods and to benefit from their strengths.

#### **1 Limitations of the study**

The main limitation of this study, before generalisations are drawn on the total EU student population studying in UK universities lies on the sample size. Sample size limitations are accentuated by the rather small response rate, although not unusual for postal questionnaires. Therefore, it remains unknown whether the sample analysed is representative of the whole EU student population studying in public-funded UK

universities. For generalisations to be drawn, concerning the total EU mobile student population, sample limitations also apply as this research i) does not include UK students studying in other EU countries, and ii) does not include EU students studying abroad in countries other than the UK. To clarify this point more, it must be stressed that the dominant patterns of student motives for study abroad may be country specific. The sample analysed here does not allow for the assessment of the possible impact of the hosting country on the factors influencing student educational choices. It does, however, provide theoretical hypotheses to be further tested in the context of other EU (and non-EU) countries.

Other methodological limitations may relate to the time data on student motives were collected. Data may have been more valid if students had been approached upon their arrival in the UK or soon after that. It is not unlikely, that student perceptions may have evolved over the study period abroad. Finally, more valid data may have been collected if the questionnaire used was translated into the mother tongue of respondents. This point may be more relevant in the cases of students who stated as the main reason for studying abroad and for selecting the UK that they wanted to improve their competence in English language, despite efforts made to use 'simple' and 'clear' language in the instruments used. Resource and time constraints, however, did not allow for such limitations to be catered for. Therefore, the discussion and the conclusions that follow must keep in mind the above mentioned limitations.

## **2 Understanding the choice to study abroad.**

This research has examined EU (non-UK) student motives for studying abroad and not in their home country, and has sought to identify the social factors that influence student educational choices and actions. On the basis of the empirical evidence collected and analysed here, it appears that the choice to study abroad is primarily influenced by students' perceptions concerning:

- i) labour markets demand for skills such as foreign language competence and international experience and communication
- ii) the higher academic status and prestige of study abroad



- iii) student interest in gaining social and academic experiences abroad
- iv) personal development of students
- v) difficulties in accessing national higher education courses at home
- vi) qualitative characteristics of national higher education systems
- vii) broader (i.e. no-strictly educational) social reasons

Data collected and analysed here support the formulation of four main hypotheses/arguments for the interpretation of the social factors involved in student choice to study in a country other than their own, seeking to increase their cultural capital and their chances for successful social integration. The first hypothesis points to the role of new educational hierarchies emerging across EU societies affected by globalisation and European integration processes. The other three hypotheses places patterns of student motives more into the particular national social and educational contexts within which student perceptions and motives are shaped and choices are made. Therefore, the main argument put forward by this Thesis is that an understanding of the social dynamics of student mobility in the EU must take into account the interaction of new educational hierarchies emerging across EU societies with factors specific to European national and regional social and educational contexts as well as the relationships among such national contexts.

The first hypothesis relates to new educational hierarchies emerging in a social context of mass higher education systems in the EU national societies that are more porous to international forces. The second hypothesis refers to the stratification of national higher education systems and institutions in the EU. The third refers to the stage of development of each national higher education system and its ability to meet social demand. The fourth refers to the diversity of higher education systems, structures and traditions in the EU providing students with different options.

#### *Hypothesis One: New educational hierarchies*

The Thesis argues that an understanding of student choice to study abroad at a higher level must placed within a social context shaped by the expansion and massification of higher education in EU countries (as well as other developed countries). Massification of higher education has impacted upon EU labour markets and

respective social patterns of student motives to study at higher levels. Higher education qualifications have become common entry qualifications into a growing number of high level occupations. Higher education qualifications have, therefore, become more relevant to the social stratification and social mobility. In such a social and labour market context, the social criteria involved in student choices have also been affected. Strictly academic criteria appear to decline and the employment value of higher education qualifications is more appreciated and influences student educational choices and actions, assigning higher educational qualifications a more credential and vocational character.

If, however, the choice to study at a higher level relates to student social aspirations for social integration, an understanding of the choice to study at a higher level *abroad* must be placed in the social and labour market context brought about by economic, political and social processes of globalisation and European integration. The Thesis argues that the growing demand for international study in the EU may be best interpreted within such a changing social context across EU societies. National social contexts and labour markets in the EU are increasingly conditioned by the growing internationalisation of national economies, technology, information, and communication. Labour markets in the EU involve growing activities and interactions with a European or international dimension, extensive social interaction of economic, political and social actors, extensive use of information technologies, and the development of European and other international law. It appears that such a changing context influences student perceptions and respective educational choices. Foreign language competence, international experience, and cultural communication and knowledge constitute additional skills, students perceive important educational credentials for their successful entry and development within the labour market, and their social integration. Therefore, the Thesis argues that in such a changing social and labour market context, and in an era of mass higher education systems, new educational hierarchies emerge and influence student choices to study abroad. Indeed, this research provides evidence that the dominant pattern of student motives for study abroad relate to their career aspirations, the employment value of educational qualifications and the additional skills developed through studying abroad for a degree or for a shorter period of time. Such international educational credentials are perceived to have a higher social value, improving chances for successful entry into

and development within the labour market, the hierarchy of occupations and the social hierarchy.

This argument is further supported by two related findings. That is, no association of factor 'Labour market value and skills' was found with student country of origin, while differences were found among students in different fields of study. Such findings suggest that although the effects of globalisation and European integration processes are rather homogeneous across all EU societies, it does not seem to disperse evenly across all career paths, labour market segments, and social domains. The labour market segments and social domains that appear to be mostly affected by globalisation and European integration processes include business and administrative positions in the labour market, the technology-based construction sector, and the legal profession. These domains reflect the main dimensions of the processes of globalisation and European integration and particularly, the extensive internationalisation of national economies (and particularly multinational business), the extensive diffusion and use of technology, and the growing development of European and international law. Moreover, the notion of the uneven effects of globalisation and European integration across labour market segments and social domains is also supported by differences found by level of study. It appears that successful entry into, and development within, research and academic professions is perceived as requiring more international educational credentials and experiences. This may reflect the growing internationalisation of scientific and technological social domains and the internationalisation of knowledge production and international transfer within the EU. The above hypothesis allows us to also argue that the growth in mobile student flows over the last decades - and differences across subjects - (see Chapter Three) may best be explained as relating to the social - and uneven - effects of growing globalisation and European integration processes.

#### Student mobility and national and regional contexts in the EU

The patterns of student perceptions of, and motives for, study abroad identified in this research vary significantly across students from different European countries and regions. Despite the rather homogeneous effects of globalisation and European integration on all national and regional contexts in the EU, an understanding of the

social dynamics of student mobility must also take into account national and regional social contexts in the EU and their relationships. For, it is within such social contexts and relationships that student perceptions are also shaped and social choices are made. Therefore, the Thesis also argues that student choice to study abroad in the EU may be best understood as an interaction of the globalisation and European integration effects with national (and regional) social contexts and their relationships within which educational choices are made and social patterns of student mobility emerge. The factors specific to European national and regional social contexts, identified in this research include i) the position of national higher education systems in the international hierarchy of systems, ii) the stage of development and expansion of national higher education systems in each country, and iii) the diversity of EU higher education systems, structures, and traditions.

*Hypothesis Two: The stratification of higher education systems in the EU*

Student motives for studying abroad appear to also relate to the positioning of national higher education systems (and institutions) in the European and international ranking of systems. Specifically, this research provides evidence that South European students (Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and notably Greek) and Irish students emphasise more, in their choice to study abroad, the higher academic status of study than students from Central and Northern European countries (France<sup>1</sup>, Germany) and regions (Scandinavian countries, Low Countries, and Austria). It appears that students from those countries perceive that, having higher status educational qualifications obtained abroad, can improve their prospects in the labour market and social hierarchies. These differences support the argument that there is, in the EU, a ranking of higher education systems and institutions based on their academic standing, status, and prestige that influence patterns of student motives for study abroad. On this academic ranking the UK higher education system seems to be positioned higher than national education systems of, particularly, South European countries (Portugal, Spain, Italy, and notably Greece) and Ireland.

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<sup>1</sup> For an analysis of reasons given for studying abroad and for selecting the UK, by French students participating in this research see West and Dimitropoulos, 'Pourquoi les étudiants français choisissent-ils d'étudier à l'étranger? Et pourquoi choisissent-ils des universités britanniques?' in Vanisotte, F., West, A., E., Houguenague, A., Dimitropoulos, Murphy-Lejeune, A., Stokes, E., (2003)

This notion is further supported by the differences in the importance assigned to the higher status and prestige, by students studying in 'old' and more prestigious UK universities than those studying in 'new' and less prestigious UK universities. These differences not only reflect the internal stratification of the UK higher education system but also support the argument that student mobility in the EU takes place in a context of stratified European higher education systems and institutions. It can, therefore, be also argued that the European educational space is stratified, and that the process of European social integration takes place within such a stratified context of educational systems and institutions. Moreover, it can also be argued that it is this stratification that may explain not only why students choose to study abroad, but also why mobile student flows in the EU are highly asymmetric.

*Hypothesis Three: The development of national systems in the EU*

The role of national social and educational contexts in student mobility patterns is also evident in the case of selective and restrictive national admissions systems in the EU countries. In cases that the choice to study abroad is influenced by difficulties students face in accessing higher education at home, the choice to study abroad can be best seen as a social strategy that, bypassing restrictive national admissions systems, policies, and regulations, aims at improving student's cultural capital and their prospects in the social struggle and competition for successful social integration. The role of selective and national admissions systems, as contextual factors, in the social dynamics of student mobility in the EU is accentuated in the case of Scandinavian, and notably Irish and Greek students. In particular, students from these countries, studying in the UK, assign more importance to the difficulties in accessing national higher education systems, preferred institutions within national higher education systems, or preferred subjects in their choice to study abroad.

Such incompatibility may result from institutional restrictions set by national authorities across all higher education institutions and subjects (e.g. in Greece) regulating the demand and flows into higher education. In EU countries with non-selective systems of higher education admissions, (e.g. France, Germany) difficulties of access may only apply to certain subjects (e.g. Medicine, Engineering, Law) or types of higher education institutions of higher social value, status and prestige (e.g.

the French Grandes Ecoles, or the university sector of higher education in EU countries with binary higher education systems). Access difficulties into such high positioned higher education institutions may influence the choice to study abroad. In such cases student failure to obtain a higher status education in home country institutions may be compensated by the status and/or the additional skills acquired through studying abroad. It thus appears that the incompatibility between social demand for higher education entry and higher education provision within European national contexts may affect student educational choices and mobility flows. Such incompatibility may reflect different stages in the development of EU educational systems or the existing chances to maximise students' capital shaped by employment conditions. As such educational choices relate to student aspirations for social mobility, it may also relate to differences across EU societies in the social structures shaping social perceptions for the possibility for social mobility. For example in Greece, it is widely accepted that the high social demand for higher education qualifications may be attributed to the social perceptions concerning the possibilities for social mobility<sup>2</sup>. Such perceptions may relate to the pace of social transformation of Greek society opening opportunities for social mobility, and the role of educational qualifications in such processes of social stratification.

*Hypothesis Four: The diversity of systems and traditions in the EU*

Student choice to study abroad in the EU takes also place in a context of diverse national higher education structures, educational, and academic traditions. This research provides some evidence that qualitative structural characteristics of national systems seem also to play a role in the choice and preference of EU students to study in a country other than their own. Such characteristics appear to include teaching and learning methods, course diversity, flexibility in course selection, and the length of study. The diversity of European higher education systems reflects different historical trajectories of state and higher education system formation and different educational philosophies<sup>3</sup>. Such qualitative characteristics seem to influence more the choice to study abroad of German, French and South European (Portugal, Italy, Spain) students,

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<sup>2</sup> See for example Tsoukalas, 1985, 1986.

<sup>3</sup> See for example Gellert 1993.

studying in the UK. Those students assign more importance to such qualitative characteristics in their choice to study abroad, than students from Scandinavian and Low Countries. These differences may be attributed to the degree of diversity of the systems of those countries with the UK higher education system and tradition. Concerning such qualitative characteristics, differences were also found among students studying at different levels. Undergraduates seem to assign more importance to such characteristics than postgraduate and research postgraduate students. These differences may be attributed to the fact that educational structures across European higher education systems may be less diverse at higher levels of study. It thus appears that the diversity of educational systems and traditions in the EU functions as a 'market' of higher education within which students are offered different options from which to choose.

#### *Student mobility and the social status of students*

This research provides also some evidence that patterns of student perceptions of and motives for study abroad relate to social and cultural integration of students. Specifically, it was found that the higher the parental education of students studying in the UK to obtain a degree the more the importance is assigned to the social and academic experience and cultural communication in their choice to study abroad. Similarly, students of higher family socio-economic status, studying in the UK for a period, assign more importance to the social and academic experiences and cultural communication in their choice to study abroad. This contrasts with the finding that students of lower level of mother education, studying in the UK for a period, assign more importance to the acquisition of skills and the improvement of labour market prospects in their choice to study abroad. Moreover, it was found that students studying in 'old' UK universities, that have a higher position in the hierarchy based on their academic standing, assign more importance to the status and the prestige of study in their choice to study abroad. On the contrary, students studying in 'new' universities, that are associated with lower status, assign more importance to the difficulties in accessing higher education institutions or preferred subjects in their home country.

These findings suggest that when the choice to study abroad is associated with maintaining students' high social position students value higher the academic and social status and prestige of study abroad, and the social and academic experiences gained. On the contrary, when upward social mobility is involved students emphasise more the additional skills and the employment value of educational qualifications obtained abroad. These findings also suggest that patterns of student motives for studying abroad relate to student's prior forms of socialisation, and particularly, their cultural capital in the embodied form (*habitus*). It also suggests that the expansion and massification of higher education systems, has not only made it more accessible to students from lower socio-economic status but that it has also affected the social character and meaning of the social demand for study at higher education level, with more students seeking more 'useful', practical, and vocational and less academically oriented knowledge, perceived valuable in their social aspirations for successful labour market entry and social integration<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> This changing meaning may also reflect some incompatibility between the objectives and expectations of traditional universities and academic staff with students' aspirations and expectations from their studies. Such incompatibility may also explain growing concern expressed by academics concerning the descending 'quality' of studies in higher education.



### **3 Understanding the choice of the UK as the place to study abroad**

Chapter Three of the Thesis has shown that the UK is the most popular destination country among EU students studying in another EU country, and that the number of students from EU countries studying in the UK, for a degree or for a period, is growing. It has also shown that the demand for study in the UK is also growing rapidly. This research has also sought to examine the social factors accounting for the popularity of the UK system and institutions among EU mobile students. Specifically, it has sought to examine how and why the specific choice of the UK, as the place to study abroad, is perceived to increase students' cultural capital and their chances for successful social integration and social mobility. The evidence collected and analysed here suggests that the choice of the UK as the place to study abroad relates largely to student motives for studying in a country other than their own and it is mainly influenced by students' perceptions concerning:

- i) the growing social demand for English language proficiency
- ii) the position of the UK higher education system and UK institutions in the international hierarchy of systems
- iii) the accessibility of UK institutions
- iv) certain qualitative characteristics of the UK system
- v) course diversity and flexibility of the UK higher education system
- vi) student social interest in British culture

Data collected and analysed in the context of this research allow for the formulation of four hypotheses on the factors involved and influence student choice of the UK as the place to study abroad. The first hypothesis relates to the position of English language in the emerging new educational hierarchies. The second relates to the relationship of the UK higher education system with other systems in the EU. The third hypothesis relates to the functioning of the UK system. The fourth relates to the characteristics of the UK system that make it distinct in the European space of higher education systems. Such hypotheses may account for the high position of the UK as destination country, among EU students studying in a country other than their own, and for the growing demand for study in the UK by EU students.

### *Hypothesis One: The role of English language in international communication*

This research provides evidence that the choice of the UK as the place to study abroad is primarily influenced by the growing social demand for proficiency in English language. The effect of English language on student choices was particularly prominent among students studying in the UK for a period. Such social demand reflects the effects of globalisation and European integration, and the extensive use of English language in international communication, technology, and science. English language skills are positioned high in the new educational hierarchies emerging in a social context increasingly shaped by growing internationalisation of national economies, societies and labour markets.

The employment value of English language skills were more emphasised by students from France, Germany, Low countries and Austria. Differences found in the importance assigned to the employment value of English language among students in different fields of study, suggest that such skills are valued higher by students in those fields of study that relate to more 'internationalised' labour market segments and social domains. It can, therefore, be argued that the broader processes of globalisation and European integration and the dominant position of English language in international communication, technology, and science 'privileges' the UK system in the international space of higher education systems placing it high in the emerging new educational hierarchies.

The role of English language in mobile students' choice of the UK as the place to study abroad is also enhanced by its popularity among foreign languages taught at lower and compulsory levels of national education systems in the EU. That is, even when the choice to study abroad is influenced by factors, other than students' wish to improve their English language competence, it is more likely that English language is under their better, or exclusive command. In such cases the chances that the UK is selected as destination country is also increased. It may therefore be argued that the triple effect of English language competence on students' choices may account for the growing number of EU students studying in the UK as well as the growing demand for study in the UK by EU students.

*Hypothesis Two: The position of the UK higher education system in the international hierarchy of systems*

Student choice of the UK as the place to study abroad relates, also, to the student's social context of the country of origin within which perceptions are shaped and educational choices are made and the relationships with the UK system. Specifically, the role of English language proficiency, in the choice of the UK, is more evident in the case of students from France, Germany, Low Countries, and Austria. Students from those countries assign more importance, in their choice of the UK, to the employment value of English language skills than students from South European and Scandinavian countries. On the contrary, students from South European (notably Greece) and Scandinavian countries assign more importance to the status and prestige of the UK system than students from Low Countries and Austria, France, and Germany, in their choice of the UK. These differences support the argument that the patterns of students' motives involved in the choice of the UK as the place to study abroad relate to the position of the student's home country higher education system in the international hierarchy of higher education systems, based on their academic standing, the international social status, prestige, and visibility. When the higher education system of the country of student's origin is positioned high in the international hierarchy of systems, the choice of the UK is more associated with the acquisition of additional skills and, particularly, English language skills. On the contrary when the system of the student's country of origin is positioned in a lower position, the choice of the UK is more associated with the higher status and prestige of studies and qualifications obtained in the UK.

This argument is further supported by the differences in the importance assigned to the status and prestige, in the choice of the UK, among students studying in different fields of study and at different institutions in the UK. Specifically, the UK appears to be positioned high in the international hierarchy of systems particularly in the fields of law, economic, social and political studies. Moreover, the status of the UK system is valued higher by students studying in 'old' and more prestigious than those in 'new' and less prestigious UK universities. These differences reflect the internal hierarchical stratification of the UK higher education system. They also suggest that

the high position of the UK system in the international hierarchy of systems relates more to the high status of particularly old UK universities, and the high status of the UK system particularly in law, economic, political, and social studies. It may, therefore, be argued that in the changing context, shaped by globalisation and European integration processes, country-subject educational hierarchies emerge and influence student choices.

Finally, further support to this hypothesis is provided by the differences found among students from different countries, studying in the UK for a period. Students from South European countries assign more importance, in their choice of the UK, to their desire to explore the possibilities for further study in the UK. On the contrary, students from Low countries, Austria, France, and Germany assign more importance to their social interest in the British culture, in their choice to study in the UK for a period. Some evidence of an interplay of social hierarchies was also evident in the perceptions of students of higher social background that assign more importance to their social interest in British culture, in their choice to study for a period in the UK.

### *Hypothesis Three: The functioning of the UK system*

This research provides also evidence that student choice of the UK as the place to study abroad is also influenced by student perceptions of the accessibility of the UK system, the wider options provided to students with in selecting their course, and the increased flexibility in making combinations of subjects. Such student perceptions seem to be best interpreted with reference to the functioning of the UK higher education system. Specifically, the UK higher education system has been in a process of expansion taking place within a context of institutional autonomy over selective student admissions procedures and course development, and competitive funding mechanisms related to student numbers. Such competitive funding mechanisms provide UK universities with structural incentives for the recruitment of students. In such a context of structural incentives UK universities have been induced to marketing activities, extensive information provision, and adjustment of their admission procedures. UK universities have thus been induced to develop diverse courses, restructure courses with the introduction of modules, develop courses to meet students' vocational needs, and provide students with flexibility in combining

different modules and subjects. It can, therefore, be argued that the market mechanisms and context within which UK institutions operate, seem to influence student perceptions of the UK system accessibility, and their choice of the UK as the place to study abroad.

This argument finds further support in the differences found in student perceptions of the accessibility of UK institutions among students studying in 'old' and 'new' UK universities. Specifically, students in more prestigious UK universities and, therefore, mostly sought after by UK as well as EU and other international students, assign less importance to the accessibility of UK universities, in their choice of the UK, than those in 'new' and less prestigious UK universities. These differences reflect the different position of 'old' and 'new' UK universities in the hierarchy of universities of the UK system and the domestic, European and other international market of students. Prestigious UK universities and, therefore, mostly sought after by students feel less the need to involve in marketing activities, and adjust their courses and admission procedures.

#### *Hypothesis Four: The distinctiveness of the UK higher education system*

This research provides also evidence that qualitative characteristics of the UK system seem also to play a role in student choice of the UK as the place to study abroad. Such characteristics, that make the UK system distinct in the European and international space of higher education systems, include mainly teaching and learning methods and practices (tutorial/seminar system) in UK institutions, and the British academic orientation and tradition. They also include British culture and society and the growing multinational and multicultural composition of the student population in UK universities, providing a more culturally diverse and tolerant context, enriching students cultural communication and experiences.

Differences across countries of student origin suggest that such qualitative characteristics seem to play a more important role in the choice of students from Germany, Low Countries and Austria, France, South European countries (Portugal, Spain, Italy) and Greece. Such characteristics are less important in the choice of students from Scandinavian countries and Ireland. These differences may be

attributed to the similarities of the higher education systems and traditions of these countries with the UK system. It can, therefore be argued that, as student mobility in the EU takes place in a context of diverse educational structures, systems and traditions, the distinctiveness of the UK system and the degree of cultural distance to students' home country system may also influence the choice of the UK.

#### **4 Conclusions of the study**

The Thesis has sought to contribute to our understanding of the social dynamics of student mobility, higher education internationalisation in the European Union, and the structuration of the European educational space. It has approached such processes of social change as the outcome of actions of social actors. It has found useful theoretical underpinnings in Mouzelis' theoretical synthesis addressing the role of hierarchies and orders in social action, depicting social action as a social game played at different levels by actors seeking to increase some type of capital (economic, political, social, cultural). Moreover, Mouzelis' thesis and conception of social action enables the role of macro, meso, or micro actors to be bridged and accommodated in this structuration and change process. From such a multi actor perspective the Thesis has examined actions of superordinate actors (European, national, institutional) with unequal resources at their disposal and has shown the limits and opportunities they set to students, as subordinate actors in their educational choices and in the structuration of the European educational space.

The Thesis has taken a particular focus on students, as micro level actors, and has examined the role of social hierarchies in their social choice and action to study at a higher level in a country other than their own. Specifically, this investigation has explored and analysed how social hierarchies affect the choice of students from EU countries to study abroad and to select the UK as the place to study abroad for a degree or for a period of study. The Thesis has argued that international student mobility may best be interpreted as a social strategy for increasing students' cultural capital improving their chances for successful social integration in the hierarchy of occupations and social hierarchies. Depending on student's social background such strategy and choice relate to student's either upward social mobility or maintaining their high social position. Students' choice and action to study abroad takes place in a social and labour market context shaped by mass higher education systems. Labour markets and social contexts in the EU also appear to increasingly be affected by globalisation and European integration processes.

In such a changing social context new educational hierarchies emerge that influence student choices to study abroad for a degree or for a period. In particular, it appears that higher level qualifications along with the development of additional skills such as foreign language competence, international experience and intercultural communication skills and knowledge, form new educational credentials that are valued high by students studying abroad. It has, therefore, been argued that these new educational hierarchies may account for the growing number of mobile students in the EU. It has also emerged in this research that students' social aspirations for social mobility lie at the heart of, and contain the social dynamics of student mobility in the EU and the growing internationalisation of higher education study. It also appears that they lie at the heart of the creation of the European educational space and the growing rapprochement of EU higher education systems and societies, that is, the process of European social integration. It, therefore, emerges that the structuration of the European education space is a process relating to systemic factors but also the actions and initiatives of collective and individual actors involved in hierarchical social games aimed at increasing some type of capital.

This research has also found that there exist differences in patterns of perceptions and motives (reasons given) across students from different EU countries. In particular, it has argued that student mobility patterns across EU societies may be best seen as an interaction of the effects of the processes of globalisation and European integration with national social and educational contexts. It appears that the national social contexts across EU societies in which student perceptions are shaped and student choices are made influence the patterns and the dynamics of student mobility in the EU. Such contextual factors may best be attributed to the different historical trajectories European nation states were involved in the process of nation state and higher education system formation, development and expansion, and current functioning.

These national contextual factors suggest that the European educational space is stratified. Although a rather variable pattern of stratification has emerged in the context of this research, such stratification is more evident on a North-South axis in the EU (at least in the current set of EU membership). These national contextual factors also suggest that the European educational space is diverse. Student mobility,



higher education internationalisation, and the process of rapprochement and closer interaction among European higher education systems, actors, and societies take place in such a diverse and stratified educational and social context. It can also be argued that it is in this hierarchical stratification and diversity that the dynamism of student mobility is also contained.

A sub-theme of the Thesis has been to provide an evaluation of policies supporting student mobility and higher education internationalisation developed in the EU as the outcome of actions of actors acting at European and national level. The findings of this research and the hypotheses they support, suggest that educational policies supporting student mobility in the EU seem to have played a facilitative rather than decisional role in the growth of student mobility. As it has emerged, it is in the broader policies generating processes and tendencies and shaping social contexts, playing a more autonomous role than deliberate educational policies as such, that the current social dynamism of student mobility is contained. Factors such as changing labour markets requirements-effecting from globalisation and European integration-the international stratification of higher education systems and institutions, and the diversity of systems and national social contexts appear to be more important driving forces for student mobility in the EU than educational policies and regulations as such. Such broader social factors and processes are, for example, reflected on the EU ERASMUS student exchange programme that was initially designed to achieve parity of incoming-outgoing student flows among co-operating institutions and countries, balancing costs and benefits involved. It has, however, been proved that only about half of such study opportunities abroad were taken up by students, with large variation across (host and home) countries (see Chapter Three). At the same time the demand (applications) of EU students seeking to study for a first degree in the UK is growing rather rapidly, not necessarily with state support but on their own initiative.

Moreover, this research has also shown that the social dynamics of student mobility and the European educational space appear to transcend and constrain the existing multi-level policy framework developed at the European, national (with large variation), or at the level of higher education institutions. Therefore, such social dynamics may also be seen as forming part of the wider social processes contributing to the shifting role and nature of national educational policies, and of the nation state

as the dominant model of social organisation with exclusive control over its own social actors, social institutions, and educational systems. Such dynamics may also be seen as containing political dynamics for more integrated educational policy development at an EU level. It can, therefore, be argued that such social dynamics open opportunities for new games to be played at the European level among European and national level actors struggling to increase or maintain their political capital, that is their influence over nationally controlled higher education systems. It may also be argued that the outcome of such games will probably be determined by two factors. First, the extent that national governments are prepared to surrender their state driven approaches of higher education control (including mobility of students in the EU) and convert into more competitive, and market-like models of higher education regulation. Second, the extent that national actors are prepared for a more federal-like European Union with stronger roles and competences of European institutions over higher education systems.

This research has identified as an important social factor for student mobility, the diversity of European higher education systems, traditions, and their structural characteristics. Ongoing activities and reforms of macro level actors involved in the intergovernmental Bologna process, aimed at increasing student mobility in the EU, seeks to harmonise structures of higher education qualifications (also including length). Such 'smoothing out' of structural differences may, however, result in affecting negatively student mobility (particularly full degree students) as it may reduce diversity and different options students may have to choose.

Furthermore, this research has found that the main social factors accounting for the popularity of the UK as destination country are English language, the accessibility of UK institutions, the position of UK institutions in the international hierarchy based on academic standing, status and prestige, and the tutorial/seminar system that facilitate better student-teacher contact. Student perceptions of accessibility, however, and particularly the extent that admissions standards are affected reduces the symbolic power of competitive access usually associated with high status. That is, such social perceptions may have a negative effect in the longer term on the perceived academic status of the UK system or particularly some of its parts. Similar may be the effect of the accessibility of UK institutions as they may be increasingly associated with the

recruitment of students failing to access their home country institutions. Moreover, growing expansion of the UK higher education system with decreasing public expenditure per student, and increasing workload of academic staff may also affect teaching methods and practices, and inflict on teacher-student contacts and the seminar/tutorial system. This growing trend may not only also contribute to further 'smoothing out' of European diversities, but it may also affect a historically established educational tradition in Europe.

Finally, the introduction of top-up fees (currently on the UK policy agenda) also calls for some reflections on their effects on student mobility in the EU. This research has shown that the demand of EU students for study in the UK is growing rapidly. It has also found that the vast majority of degree students are from an upper middle or high social background. The effect of top-up fees is, therefore, likely to be more evident in the number of applications of students from lower socio-economic background but not necessarily in the overall demand for study in the UK. It is, therefore, also reasonable to argue that the most likely effect of top-up fees may be on the social intake of EU students admitted in UK universities. As the introduction of fees in 1998 has also shown, the effect may not be equal across students from different parts of Europe, given regional disparities across the EU. It is also reasonable to argue that EU student flows in the UK may also be affected by the development of exchange rates between the euro and British sterling and the joining of single European currency by the UK. The longer-term effects, however, and playing out of such economic, political, and social trends and dynamics influencing mobile student choices remain to be seen<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> For more reflections on the future prospects of student mobility in the EU see A. Dimitropoulos (2003) *'Reflections on the future prospects of student mobility in the EU'* paper presented at the European Conference on 'International Mobility: Present Situation and Future Prospects' organised in Trieste (Italy) under the auspices of the Italian EU Presidency. The conference proceedings are going to be published by the publishing house Il Mulino later in 2004.

## **5 Further research and directions of study**

It has already been argued that one of the limitations of this study is the small sample and the relatively low response rate. It would, therefore, be useful to carry out more research and confirm the findings of this research. As this research has examined the dynamics of student mobility at a certain point in time, it would also be useful research to examine possible trends and changes not only on the social factors influencing student choices but also possible changes on actual student flows across EU countries. In addition, further research in this area is needed with a larger sample of mobile EU students studying in EU countries other than the UK and assess whether and how the findings of this research have been influenced by the host country of students. Such research would further improve our understanding of the dynamics of student mobility in the EU not only with the examination of the factors influencing the choice of UK students to study abroad, but also the factors influencing the choice to study abroad in non-English speaking countries. Furthermore, the EU is going soon to enlarge and include ex-communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. As higher education systems in those countries are less expanded than in Western European countries, it would be interesting to examine and compare the social factors influencing students from those countries to study abroad. The findings of this research would suggest and support the hypothesis that students from those countries would emphasise more the status and prestige of studies in certain Western countries, than labour market skills and value of qualifications obtained abroad.

A central argument of this research has been that student mobility in the EU is influenced by student perceptions of labour market requirements. A better assessment of the validity of such a research hypothesis can be provided with further comparative research across EU countries examining labour markets and changes in their recruitment requirements and practices. Such a research direction would further assess which, and to what extent, labour market segments have been affected by the broader processes of globalisation and European integration. Such research would not only shed more light on the multiple social effects of globalisation and European integration but it would also provide a better understanding of the ways national social contexts are affected and change.

Further research is also needed with respect to the broader process of complete or partial internationalisation and denationalisation of higher education in the EU by examining the perceptions, motives and actions of other individual or collective social actors involved, and particularly, higher education institutions, departments, and academics<sup>6</sup>.

The focus of this research was on the stage of decision making and choice formation by mobile students. Further research and theoretical development is, however, needed with respect to the social effects and impacts of mobility and higher education internationalisation on social actors but also at the political level. Such research may examine student social and educational experiences while abroad as well as the intentions and further development of students after the completion of their studies. Of particular interest in such a research direction would be to examine i) the extent that mobility for the purposes of study plays a role not only in the development of a European labour force but also in the development of labour mobility in the EU<sup>7</sup>, and ii) the impact of international study on students' perceptions of and attitudes to European integration, but also with respect to their own social context. Such research may also assess the role played by internationalisation of higher level learning processes and experiences on national and European identities, and on 'ways of thinking'. In such a research direction, it would also be interesting to examine whether and how such impacts are associated with the variable pattern of educational and cultural hierarchies identified in this research. These research directions can provide a better understanding of the concept as well as the process of European social integration and further develop the sociology of European integration.

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<sup>6</sup> Ongoing collaborative research in the context of the EU-funded HEIGLO project examines also national and European policies and strategies and focuses on higher education institutions in seven EU countries (UK, Germany, France, Greece, Portugal, Norway, Austria) as institutional and social actors involved in the process of higher education internationalisation and European social integration. Specifically, the HEIGLO project examines international actions, policies and strategies of higher education institutions in the participating countries and explores the role played by European and national policies, state-higher education relationships and regulatory frameworks, and social hierarchies within and across higher education systems, institutions, departments and disciplines in those countries. The HEIGLO project and the research network was initiated and co-authored by A. Dimitropoulos.

<sup>7</sup> Such a topic was developed by A. Dimitropoulos (2000) *EU students abroad and their disposition for action. From insularity to openness?* Paper presented at the European Conference on Educational Research (ECER 2000), 20-23 September 2000, Edinburgh, Scotland.

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## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX 1

### Flows and patterns of European student mobility

Table A.1 EU mobile students studying in another EU country in early 1980s (absolute numbers)

Host country	Country of origin																	Total
	Year	GR	GE-F	IT	UK	FR	FI	SP	NE	AU	LU	PO	BE	IR	SW	DE	GE-D	
GE-F	80	5417	0	1441	1499	2655	825	1022	1600	2779	692	287	542	107	421	247	-	19534
FR	80	4220	3640	1450	2162	-	0	2139	383	0	920	1587	739	690	0	0	0	17930
IT	80	12435	1077	-	214	357	25	59	32	59	11	25	141	10	34	17	164	14660
AU	81	661	3246	2343	121	128	105	54	39	-	345	20	18	13	62	17	4	7176
SW	84	440	359	79	255	102	3363	81	95	88	2	57	11	13	-	349	7	5301
BE	80	382	562	722	151	540	8	224	1036	14	627	156	-	20	20	10	1	4473
UK	80	1993	249	122	-	257	46	151	144	32	7	231	61	334	77	34	11	3749
NE	81	59	808	127	220	109	25	89	-	62	10	39	361	10	32	21	5	1977
DE	80	16	316	19	179	97	64	20	65	18	0	10	12	13	272	-	1	1102
SP	80	87	208	138	121	195	0	-	34	21	0	171	55	0	4	7	0	1041
FI	83	5	58	10	29	19	-	2	10	8	0	3	2	1	96	11	0	254
IR	80	3	67	10	9	19	5	11	14	2	7	4	10	-	7	4	0	172
GR	80	-	0	14	47	9	5	3	1	7	0	0	0	0	0	1	35	122
PO	80	0	21	6	8	6	3	57	5	1	0	-	2	0	1	0	1	111
LU		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GE-D	82	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total EU		30460	14525	7998	12988	8019	4990	5078	4943	3430	2655	3129	2795	1999	2228	1212	266	77602

Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbooks

**Table A.2: EU mobile students in the mid-1990s (absolute numbers)**

Host country	Country of origin																
	Year	GR	GE	FR	IT	IR	SP	UK	NE	AU	PO	BE	FI	SW	DE	LU	Total
UK	93	17073	12402	11312	4850	17160	7261	-	2781	961	1030	2509	1189	1866	1563	543	82500
GE	95	8283	-	6046	6201	617	4500	3171	2572	6689	1491	1039	1093	1070	677	1221	44670
FR	93	2931	5949	-	3175	593	3252	4194	842	333	3525	1574	252	759	447	1066	28892
BE	94	928	655	5137	4421	67	1542	321	2949	30	504	-	32	69	54	1605	18314
AU	95	354	5314	350	6146	36	250	260	102	-	38	84	157	243	63	288	13685
SP	94	177	2458	2895	1767	263	-	1948	698	402	545	632	108	216	195	17	12321
IT	95	6994	1299	605	-	22	194	157	52	97	-	188	64	101	49	23	9845
SW	95	162	635	188	122	36	93	422	119	124	27	14	2201	-	677	-	4820
NE	92	134	1756	236	344	27	346	612	-	85	92	774	73	99	79	18	4675
IR	95	41	421	301	85	-	174	1810	49	26	12	47	58	54	32	10	3120
DE	95	14	548	85	58	31	55	361	85	33	17	15	73	328	-	1	1704
PO	94	3	204	537	60	3	203	59	21	5	-	26	4	8	2	11	1146
FI	95	13	167	38	41	16	18	94	27	15	9	9	-	279	38	-	764
GR	91	-	72	1	12	0	1	0	4	19	1	24	3	1	0	0	138
LU																-	
EU total		37107	31880	27731	27282	18871	17889	13409	10301	8819	7291	6935	5307	5093	3876	4803	226594

Source: UNESCO Statistical Yearbooks

**Table A.3 Actual mobility of students within ERASMUS by country of home institution and host country,  
1994-95 (absolute numbers)**

country of origin	host country																		total
	BE	DE	GE	GR	SP	FR	IR	IT	LU	NE	AU	PO	FI	SW	UK	CH	IS	NO	
BE		65	380	73	487	598	167	224	0	328	44	64	45	120	764	71	0	50	3480
DE	74		308	14	201	238	70	85	0	109	43	28	8	22	547	12	0	12	1771
GE	425	196		170	1604	2739	716	918	0	563	244	180	207	385	3992	173	4	117	12633
GR	131	28	216		134	323	53	181		155	45	30	31	28	553	10	0	10	1928
SP	541	161	896	93		1743	391	940	0	556	99	175	64	156	2609	63	2	48	8537
FR	198	99	1574	109	1567		488	559	0	375	148	181	107	199	4140	48	0	52	9844
IR	134	16	334	22	203	483		85	0	94	44	21	26	25	132	2	0	11	1632
IT	349	110	1053	85	1188	1468	229		0	412	153	138	68	139	1680	85	5	55	7217
LUX	1	0	13	0	6	8	2	0		3	2	1	0	1	10	0	0	0	47
NE	318	135	541	87	586	694	152	225	0		62	90	115	317	1363	73	1	94	4853
AU	72	45	141	27	270	366	70	217	0	109		29	0	0	455	0	0	0	1801
PO	131	37	184	13	216	378	48	169	0	135	16		22	42	474	20	0	18	1903
FI	82	32	368	31	83	152	74	54	0	158	1	20		1	584	0	0	1	1641
SW	104	39	484	33	144	343	106	62	0	290	18	22	0		650	5	0	2	2302
UK	375	215	2139	179	1757	4251	196	785	0	937	216	203	261	324		65	3	82	11988
CH	36	11	167	6	67	160	17	66	0	41	1	6	1	0	137		0	1	717
IS	2	7	22	0	5	14	3	9	0	9	0	0	0	0	12	0		0	83
NO	46	30	229	14	84	145	44	37	0	95	5	7	0	0	244	0	0		980
EUR	2	1	20	1	3	8	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	1	47
total	3021	1227	9069	957	8605	14111	2827	4620	1	4369	1141	1195	955	1759	18351	627	15	554	73404

Source: European Commission



**Table A.4 Actual mobility of students within ERASMUS**  
by country of home institution and host country in 1994/95 (percentages)

home country	country of host institution																		% of total EU
	UK	FR	GE	SP	IT	NE	BE	IR	SW	DE	AU	PO	GR	FI	CH	NO	LUX	IS	
GE	31.6	21.7	-	12.7	7.3	4.5	3.4	5.7	3.0	1.6	1.9	1.4	1.3	1.6	1.4	0.9	0	0.0	17.2
UK	-	35.5	17.8	14.7	6.5	7.8	3.1	1.6	2.7	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.5	2.2	0.5	0.7	0	0.0	16.3
FR	42.1	-	16.0	15.9	5.7	3.8	2.0	5.0	2.0	1.0	1.5	1.8	1.1	1.1	0.5	0.5	0	0	13.4
SP	30.6	20.4	10.5	-	11.0	6.5	6.3	4.6	1.8	1.9	1.2	2.0	1.1	0.7	0.7	0.6	0	0.0	11.6
IT	23.3	20.3	14.6	16.5	-	5.7	4.8	3.2	1.9	1.5	2.1	1.9	1.2	0.9	1.2	0.8	0	0.1	9.8
NE	28.1	14.3	11.1	12.1	4.6	-	6.6	3.1	6.5	2.8	1.3	1.9	1.8	2.4	1.5	1.9	0	0.0	6.6
BE	22.0	17.2	10.9	14.0	6.4	9.4	--	4.8	3.4	1.9	1.3	1.8	2.1	1.3	2.0	1.4	0	0	4.7
SW	28.2	14.9	21.0	6.3	2.7	12.6	4.5	4.6	-	1.7	0.8	1.0	1.4	0.0	0.2	0.1	0	0	3.1
GR	28.7	16.8	11.2	7.0	9.4	8.0	6.8	2.7	1.5	1.5	2.3	1.6	-	1.6	0.5	0.5	0	0	2.6
AU	25.3	20.3	7.8	15.0	12.0	6.1	4.0	3.9	0.0	2.5	-	1.6	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	0	2.5
PO	24.9	19.9	9.7	11.4	8.9	7.1	6.9	2.5	2.2	1.9	0.8	-	0.7	1.2	1.1	0.9	0	0	2.5
DE	30.9	13.4	17.4	11.3	4.8	6.2	4.2	4.0	1.2	-	2.4	1.6	0.8	0.5	0.7	0.7	0	0	2.4
IR	8.1	29.6	20.5	12.4	5.2	5.8	8.2	-	1.5	1.0	2.7	1.3	1.3	1.6	0.1	0.7	0	0	2.2
FI	35.6	9.3	22.4	5.1	3.3	9.6	5.0	4.5	0.1	2.0	0.1	1.2	1.9	-	0.0	0.1	0	0	2.2
NO	24.9	14.8	23.4	8.6	3.8	9.7	4.7	4.5	0.0	3.1	0.5	0.7	1.4	0.0	0.0	-	0	0	1.3
CH	19.1	22.3	23.3	9.3	9.2	5.7	5.0	2.4	0.0	1.5	0.1	0.8	0.8	0.1	-	0.1	0	0	1.0
LUX	21.3	17.0	27.7	12.8	0.0	6.4	2.1	4.3	2.1	0.0	4.3	2.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0	0.1
IS	14.5	16.9	26.5	6.0	10.8	10.8	2.4	3.6	0.0	8.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	-	0.1
EUIs	10.6	17.0	42.6	6.4	8.5	0.0	4.3	2.1	0.0	2.1	0.0	0.0	2.1	0.0	0.0	2.1	2.1	0	0.1
total	25.0	19.2	12.4	11.7	6.3	6.0	4.1	3.9	2.4	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.3	1.3	0.9	0.8	0.0	0.0	100

Source: European Commission

**Table A.5 Actual student mobility within the ERASMUS programme, 1999-2000 (absolute numbers)**

host country	country of host institution																	
	UK	FR	SP	GE	IT	NE	SW	BE	IR	FI	AU	PO	DE	GR	NO	IS	LU	total
FR	5700	-	3043	2787	1004	687	631	299	935	320	300	246	284	127	132	8	2	16505
SP	3413	3248	0	2437	2410	964	468	877	425	372	260	618	382	157	114	16	0	16161
GE	3928	3148	2619	-	1240	824	960	290	704	459	281	210	284	158	247	24	7	15383
IT	1771	2265	3289	1734	0	487	367	511	194	280	345	408	282	153	132	16	0	12234
UK	0	3468	1852	1583	866	511	335	226	75	331	177	114	194	97	50	9	0	9888
BE	558	781	874	409	358	440	146	-	123	188	98	147	97	61	51	3	0	4334
NE	1099	553	657	442	196	0	379	236	126	207	86	68	113	54	100	7	2	4325
FI	859	341	279	621	136	377	90	111	113	-	163	35	37	76	29	3	0	3270
SW	826	484	270	589	95	288	0	89	77	12	192	21	30	26	20	3	0	3022
AU	492	466	436	221	342	209	205	88	107	109	0	50	69	37	61	12	3	2907
PO	251	387	509	268	340	116	85	157	29	60	45	0	65	42	27	1	0	2382
GR	249	355	225	279	195	128	68	113	31	61	68	43	48	-	10	0	0	1873
DE	507	224	230	270	89	130	25	50	49	16	67	11	-	18	32	13	0	1731
IR	64	615	220	404	70	81	44	65	0	28	43	9	19	8	3	0	0	1673
NO	223	169	151	159	67	107	42	30	24	20	38	14	52	11	0	0	0	1107
LU	4	28	9	16	4	1	2	0	1	1	13	5	0	1	0	0	-	85
IS	13	17	13	24	17	3	8	3	0	5	5	0	30	0	0	0	0	138
LI	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
EUI	5	4	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
total	19964	16553	14676	12244	7429	5354	3856	3145	3013	2469	2181	2000	1986	1026	1008	115	14	97033

Source: European Commission

**Table A.6 EU domiciled students in UK higher education by EU country of domicile level of study, and sex, 1997/98**

level	sex	GR	IR	GE	FR	SP	IT	SW	NE	FI	BE	PO	DE	AU	LU	EU
<b>pr</b>	<i>t</i>	2203	983	1758	942	607	1110	127	286	107	206	547	157	71	36	<b>9140</b>
	f	937	417	596	428	303	530	45	107	44	85	239	71	23	13	<b>3838</b>
	m	1266	566	1162	514	304	580	82	179	63	121	308	86	48	23	<b>5302</b>
<b>pt</b>	<i>t</i>	3823	1866	1514	1594	809	792	433	759	231	270	247	261	127	53	<b>12779</b>
	f	2378	1226	990	1170	575	517	308	361	156	176	166	174	79	50	<b>8326</b>
	m	1445	640	524	424	234	275	125	398	75	94	81	87	48	3	<b>4453</b>
<b>fd</b>	<i>t</i>	16484	8980	5071	5583	3142	1854	1512	1041	1478	1159	884	850	434	374	<b>48846</b>
	f	6223	4741	2802	2517	1530	1001	1010	550	979	559	368	570	225	183	<b>23263</b>
	m	10261	4239	2264	3066	1612	853	502	491	499	600	516	280	209	191	<b>25583</b>
<b>ou</b>	<i>t</i>	1125	3626	3894	3920	2352	1305	1067	520	530	405	224	348	347	17	<b>19680</b>
	f	489	2808	2045	2343	1445	765	696	286	327	227	145	220	186	7	<b>11989</b>
	m	636	818	1849	1577	907	540	371	234	203	178	79	128	161	10	<b>7691</b>
<b>t</b>	f	10027	9192	6438	6458	3853	2813	2059	1304	1506	1047	918	1035	513	253	<b>47416</b>
	m	15575	6702	6599	6386	3367	2441	1282	1513	924	1122	1062	709	534	256	<b>48472</b>
<b>GT</b>		25602	15894	13037	12844	7220	5254	3341	2817	2430	2169	1980	1744	1047	509	<b>95888</b>

pr= postgraduate research

pt= postgraduate taught

fd= first degree

ou= other undergraduate

Source: HESA

f= female

m= male

t= total

GT= Grand Total

**Table A.7 EU students in the UK, by subject and country of domicile, 1997-98 (absolute numbers)**

	GR	IR	GE	FR	SP	IT	SW	NE	FI	BE	PO	DE	AU	LU	<i>EU total</i>
Business & Administrative studies	4386	1275	2220	2495	1596	695	652	544	447	261	272	349	137	48	<b>15377</b>
Engineering & Technology	6282	1432	1188	2115	754	423	227	260	204	204	330	98	87	35	<b>13639</b>
Combined	1665	1113	2342	2153	1223	771	418	374	398	314	171	237	223	53	<b>11455</b>
Languages	1597	518	1382	1478	1118	753	468	157	188	251	116	115	90	84	<b>8315</b>
Social, Economic & Political studies	2313	799	1108	695	524	861	268	239	264	288	209	218	82	69	<b>7937</b>
Subjects allied to medicine	449	4330	218	119	114	53	87	108	103	36	38	42	23	4	<b>5724</b>
Biological sciences	1561	1201	519	363	233	243	116	99	118	101	159	78	45	44	<b>4880</b>
Physical sciences	802	726	625	992	300	295	70	187	69	93	88	41	32	26	<b>4346</b>
Creative Arts & Design	862	611	738	320	292	228	400	98	216	106	159	220	67	22	<b>4339</b>
Law	973	275	599	605	189	177	129	119	86	151	27	75	66	33	<b>3504</b>
Computer science	1547	578	242	378	178	78	90	202	59	58	72	20	32	19	<b>3553</b>
Architecture, Building & Planning	876	826	448	167	153	119	58	77	55	50	79	38	37	5	<b>2988</b>
Education	501	822	261	379	157	114	128	143	44	30	89	59	41	12	<b>2780</b>
Humanities	393	268	527	192	109	199	90	62	94	90	36	68	33	17	<b>2178</b>
Librarianship & information science	327	236	157	113	83	43	70	38	57	28	32	36	14	7	<b>1241</b>
Mathematical sciences	537	110	171	112	65	82	25	17	9	36	43	14	11	12	<b>1244</b>
Agriculture & related subjects	268	526	61	72	64	31	15	26	8	20	31	14	13	6	<b>1155</b>
Medicine & Dentistry	250	220	219	87	62	84	21	61	9	45	26	21	13	13	<b>1131</b>
Veterinary science	13	28	12	9	6	5	9	6	2	7	3	1	1	0	<b>102</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>25602</b>	<b>15894</b>	<b>13037</b>	<b>12844</b>	<b>7220</b>	<b>5254</b>	<b>3341</b>	<b>2817</b>	<b>2430</b>	<b>2169</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1744</b>	<b>1047</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>95888</b>

Source: HESA

**Table A.8 EU domiciled enrolments by subject and sex, 1997/98**

<b>Subject</b>	<b>female</b>	<b>male</b>
Engineering & Technology	2073	11566
Computer science	714	2839
Mathematical sciences	379	865
Physical sciences	1741	2605
Agriculture & related subjects	473	682
Architecture, Building & Planning	1292	1696
Business & Administrative studies	6697	8680
Social, Economic & Political studies	3968	3969
Law	1908	1596
Medicine & Dentistry	631	500
Veterinary science	57	45
Humanities	1266	912
Combined	6675	4780
Creative Arts & Design	2732	1607
Biological sciences	3179	1701
Librarianship & information science	828	413
Education	1961	819
Languages	6195	2120
Subjects allied to medicine	4647	1077
<b>Total</b>	<b>47416</b>	<b>48472</b>

Source: HESA

**Table A.9 EU student enrolments in the UK, 1997/98 (absolute numbers)**

<b>AU</b>	1047
<b>BE</b>	2169
<b>DE</b>	1744
<b>FI</b>	2430
<b>FR</b>	12844
<b>GE</b>	13037
<b>GR</b>	25602
<b>IR</b>	15894
<b>IT</b>	5254
<b>LU</b>	509
<b>NE</b>	2817
<b>PO</b>	1980
<b>SP</b>	7220
<b>SW</b>	3341
<b>total</b>	95888

Source: HESA

**Table A.10 EU applicants by country of domicile and preferred subject group, 1999**

<b>Subject group</b>	<b>AU</b>	<b>BE</b>	<b>DE</b>	<b>FI</b>	<b>FR</b>	<b>GE</b>	<b>GR</b>	<b>IR</b>	<b>IT</b>	<b>LU</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>PO</b>	<b>SP</b>	<b>SW</b>
Medicine/Dentistry	19	19	11	20	44	134	145	265	42	12	43	79	34	74
Subjects allied to medicine	8	14	10	10	39	46	233	1538	22	4	11	26	31	31
Biological sciences	9	49	24	44	68	152	411	357	49	24	24	42	42	71
Agriculture and related subjects	3	11	2	10	35	18	39	305	6	3	16	11	11	24
Physical sciences	6	14	6	22	138	45	82	137	23	10	22	12	63	20
Mathematical sciences and informatics	19	19	11	7	124	63	330	273	41	9	10	21	53	59
Engineering and technology	9	40	14	16	308	106	1002	403	63	17	30	65	147	57
Architecture, building and planning	0	12	5	8	18	46	215	281	16	4	4	17	24	25
Social studies	42	124	57	120	189	376	674	356	139	21	60	35	68	185
Business and administrative studies	54	63	60	105	364	448	700	510	109	21	50	55	278	228
Mass communications and documentation	3	10	17	49	43	87	99	122	30	5	5	16	26	55
Languages and related disciplines	8	32	20	55	201	167	211	119	69	42	14	16	51	45
Humanities	4	17	4	30	34	46	36	65	16	10	10	8	11	25
Creative arts	55	50	103	179	239	380	415	481	105	31	32	78	116	287
Education	1	4	1	8	13	21	29	523	3	2	7	2	8	6
Combined Sciences	3	5	0	1	38	24	22	53	4	2	3	0	7	12
Combined social studies	7	2	0	1	9	10	18	17	4	0	1	1	3	4
Combined arts	3	11	4	16	26	39	8	106	17	8	5	5	15	18
Science combined with social studies or arts	8	6	4	7	17	36	44	100	22	5	1	7	10	19
Social studies combined with arts	15	32	15	24	63	143	37	61	50	12	11	5	28	51
Other general and combined studies	5	7	4	11	18	55	38	25	10	1	5	4	3	11
No preferred subject group	41	71	74	110	458	399	2033	772	206	19	44	81	268	299
<b>Total</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>612</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>2486</b>	<b>2841</b>	<b>6821</b>	<b>6869</b>	<b>1046</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>1297</b>	<b>1606</b>

Source: UCAS

**Table A.11 EU applicants by country of domicile and preferred subject group, 1994**

<b>Subject group</b>	<b>AU</b>	<b>BE</b>	<b>DE</b>	<b>FI</b>	<b>FR</b>	<b>GE</b>	<b>GR</b>	<b>IR</b>	<b>IT</b>	<b>LU</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>PO</b>	<b>SP</b>	<b>SW</b>
Medicine/Dentistry	8	11	14	3	23	121	171	410	25	4	21	19	45	12
Subjects allied to medicine	1	6	3	2	17	35	110	1865	9	1	9	8	23	6
Biological sciences	6	31	24	4	40	112	205	698	34	16	22	24	35	16
Agriculture and related subjects	1	7	2	0	13	21	12	385	4	1	3	3	6	7
Physical sciences	2	17	3	0	28	50	74	297	24	9	20	3	26	2
Mathematical sciences and informatics	3	9	3	2	25	41	204	219	15	5	9	8	7	7
Engineering and technology	4	34	12	2	90	73	798	890	52	9	37	40	75	4
Architecture, building and planning	4	6	3	0	9	63	100	336	16	1	4	9	27	10
Social studies	15	83	31	15	162	288	433	634	119	26	58	35	93	60
Business and administrative studies	9	53	35	9	142	220	529	1030	59	11	35	24	120	43
Mass communications and documentation	0	5	3	1	8	12	36	116	5	1	2	4	3	4
Languages and related disciplines	3	45	17	6	103	157	171	201	83	21	35	8	58	15
Humanities	3	13	12	2	23	41	52	112	29	4	13	1	9	11
Creative arts	4	14	19	3	26	76	69	199	18	4	12	15	33	13
Education	0	13	3	1	17	19	17	750	1	2	6	4	10	1
Combined Sciences	0	3	2	1	8	14	19	36	1	1	2	1	6	1
Combined social studies	0	0	1	0	0	11	19	23	1	0	2	2	2	1
Combined arts	0	13	11	2	34	45	27	228	4	2	14	4	12	8
Science combined with social studies or arts	0	3	4	0	5	16	34	56	3	2	4	1	3	3
Social studies combined with arts	2	12	10	2	34	72	30	151	25	4	12	4	28	8
Other general and combined studies	1	4	4	4	16	60	41	148	12	1	11	2	14	7
No preferred subject group	11	33	16	6	76	143	368	779	67	5	23	17	59	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>899</b>	<b>1690</b>	<b>3519</b>	<b>9563</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>271</b>

Source: UCAS

**Table A.12a Percentages of EU applicants by country of domicile and preferred subject group, 1994 and 1999**

Subject group	AU		BE		DE		FI		FR		GE		GR	
	1994	1999	1994	1999	1994	1999	1994	1999	1994	1999	1994	1999	1994	1999
Medicine/Dentistry	10.4	5.9	2.7	3.1	6.0	2.4	4.6	2.3	2.6	1.7	7.2	4.7	4.9	2.1
Subjects allied to medicine	1.3	2.4	1.4	2.2	1.3	2.2	3.1	1.1	1.9	1.5	2.1	1.6	3.1	3.4
Biological sciences	7.8	2.7	7.5	8.0	10.3	5.3	6.2	5.1	4.4	2.7	6.6	6.1	5.8	6.0
Agriculture and related subjects	1.3	0.9	1.7	1.7	0.9	0.4	0.0	1.1	1.4	1.4	1.2	0.6	0.3	0.5
Physical sciences	2.6	1.8	4.1	2.2	1.3	1.3	0.0	2.5	3.1	5.5	3.0	1.5	2.1	1.2
Mathematical sciences and informatics	3.9	5.9	2.2	3.1	1.3	2.4	3.1	0.8	2.8	4.9	2.4	2.2	5.8	4.8
Engineering and technology	5.2	2.7	8.2	6.5	5.2	3.1	3.1	1.8	10.0	12.3	4.3	3.7	22.7	14.6
Architecture, building and planning	5.2	0	1.4	1.9	1.3	1.1	0.0	0.9	1.0	0.7	3.7	1.6	2.8	3.1
Social studies	19.5	0.6	20.0	20.2	13.4	12.7	23.1	14.0	18.0	7.6	17.0	13.2	12.3	9.8
Business and administrative studies	11.7	13.0	12.8	10.2	15.1	13.4	13.8	12.3	15.8	14.6	13.0	15.7	15.0	10.2
Mass communications and documentation	0.0	16.7	1.2	1.6	1.3	3.8	1.5	5.7	0.9	1.7	0.7	3.0	1.0	1.4
Languages and related disciplines	3.9	0.9	10.8	5.2	7.3	4.4	9.2	6.4	11.5	8.0	9.3	5.8	4.9	3.0
Humanities	3.9	2.4	3.1	2.7	5.2	0.8	3.1	3.5	2.6	1.3	2.4	1.6	1.5	0.5
Creative arts	5.2	17.0	3.4	8.1	8.2	23.0	4.6	20.9	2.9	9.6	4.5	13.3	2.0	6.0
Education	0.0	1.2	3.1	0.6	1.3	0.2	1.5	0.9	1.9	0.5	1.1	0.7	0.5	0.4
Combined Sciences	0.0	0.9	0.7	0.8	0.9	0	1.5	0.1	0.9	1.5	0.8	0.8	0.5	0.3
Combined social studies	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.3	0.4	0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.5	0.2
Combined arts	0.0	0.9	3.1	1.7	4.7	0.8	3.1	1.8	3.8	1.0	2.7	1.3	0.8	0.1
Science combined with social studies or arts	0.0	2.4	0.7	0.9	1.7	0.8	0.0	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.6
Social studies combined with arts	2.6	4.6	2.9	5.2	4.3	3.3	3.1	2.8	3.8	2.5	4.3	5.0	0.9	0.5
Other general and combined studies	1.3	1.5	1.0	1.1	1.7	0.8	6.2	1.2	1.8	0.7	3.6	1.9	1.2	0.5
No preferred subject group	14.3	12.7	8.0	11.6	6.9	16.5	9.2	12.8	8.5	18.4	8.5	14.0	10.5	29.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: UCAS



**Table A.12b Percentages of EU applicants by country of domicile and preferred subject group, 1994 and 1999**

Subject group	IR		IT		LU		NE		PO		SP		SW	
	1994	1999	1994	1999	1994	1999	1994	1999	1994	1999	1994	1999	1994	1999
Medicine/Dentistry	4.3	3.8	4.1	4.0	3.1	4.5	5.9	10.5	8.1	13.4	6.5	2.6	4.4	4.6
Subjects allied to medicine	19.5	22.3	1.5	2.1	0.8	1.5	2.5	2.6	3.4	4.4	3.3	2.3	2.2	1.9
Biological sciences	7.3	5.1	5.6	4.6	12.3	9.1	6.2	9.1	10.2	7.1	5.0	3.2	5.9	1.4
Agriculture and related subjects	4.0	4.4	0.7	0.5	0.8	1.1	0.8	6.1	1.3	1.8	0.9	0.8	2.6	1.8
Physical sciences	3.1	1.9	4.0	2.1	6.9	3.8	5.6	5.3	1.3	2.0	3.7	4.8	0.7	1.2
Mathematical sciences and informatics	2.3	3.9	2.5	3.9	3.8	3.4	2.5	2.4	3.4	3.5	1.0	4.0	2.6	3.6
Engineering and technology	9.3	5.8	8.6	6.0	6.9	6.4	10.5	7.3	16.9	11.0	10.8	11.3	1.5	3.5
Architecture, building and planning	3.5	4.0	2.6	1.5	0.8	1.5	1.1	0.9	3.8	2.9	3.9	1.8	3.7	1.5
Social studies	6.6	5.1	19.6	13.2	20.0	8.0	16.4	14.7	14.8	5.9	13.4	5.2	22.1	11.5
Business and administrative studies	10.8	7.4	9.7	10.4	8.5	8.0	9.9	12.2	10.2	9.3	17.3	21.4	15.9	14.1
Mass communications and documentation	1.2	1.7	0.8	2.8	0.8	1.9	0.6	1.2	1.7	2.7	0.4	2.0	1.5	3.4
Languages and related disciplines	2.1	1.7	13.7	6.5	16.2	16.0	9.9	3.4	3.4	2.7	8.4	3.9	5.5	2.8
Humanities	1.2	0.9	4.8	1.5	3.1	3.8	3.7	2.4	0.4	1.3	1.3	0.8	4.1	1.5
Creative arts	2.1	7.0	3.0	10.0	3.1	11.8	3.4	7.8	6.4	13.3	4.8	8.9	4.8	17.8
Education	7.8	7.6	0.2	0.2	1.5	0.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	0.3	1.4	0.6	0.4	0.3
Combined Sciences	0.4	0.7	0.2	0.3	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.4	0	0.9	0.5	0.4	0.7
Combined social studies	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.0	0	0.6	0.2	0.8	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2
Combined arts	2.4	1.5	0.7	1.6	1.5	3.0	4.0	1.2	1.7	0.8	1.7	1.1	3.0	1.1
Science combined with social studies or arts	0.6	1.4	0.5	2.1	1.5	1.9	1.1	0.2	0.4	1.1	0.4	0.7	1.1	1.1
Social studies combined with arts	1.6	0.8	4.1	4.7	3.1	4.5	3.4	2.6	1.7	0.8	4.0	2.1	3.0	3.1
Other general and combined studies	1.5	0.3	2.0	0.9	0.8	0.3	3.1	1.2	0.8	0.6	2.0	0.2	2.6	0.6
No preferred subject group	8.1	11.2	11.1	19.6	3.8	7.2	6.5	10.7	7.2	13.8	8.5	20.6	11.8	18.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: UCAS

## APPENDIX 2

### Factors extracted with Principal Component Analysis

#### *Degree students*

#### Reasons for studying abroad

##### Factor 1: Labour market value and skills

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I thought that studying abroad would improve my job prospects	0.869
I thought that having international experience I would have better job prospects	0.827
I wanted to improve my chances of getting a good job	0.808
I thought that for the career I want it would be better to study abroad	0.726
I thought that a higher level of English proficiency would improve my job prospects	0.621
I wanted to improve my foreign language competence	0.502
Many good students go to study abroad	0.428

##### Factor 2: *Quality of study*

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I wanted a better quality education than the one offered in my home country	0.821
My preferred course would be of better quality abroad	0.814
I thought that facilities (e.g. laboratories, libraries) in my home country were not very good	0.739
I wanted to get better research experience than I could get in my home country	0.617
I thought that teaching methods would be boring in my home country	0.431
I thought that courses in my home country would be too general	0.427
I wanted to get a different perspective on my subject	0.451

##### Factor 3: *Academic and social experience*

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I wanted to experience different teaching and learning methods	0.703
I wanted to experience foreign academic communities	0.698
I wanted to experience other cultures	0.671
I wanted to broaden my horizons	0.572
I wanted to improve my foreign language competence	0.492
I wanted to get a different perspective on my subject	0.451

**Factor 4: *Accessibility***

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
23. It was difficult to get into my preferred institution in my home country	0.923
22. It was difficult to get into any higher education institution in my home country	0.897
24. It was difficult to get into my preferred subject in my home country	0.882

**Factor 5: *Personal development***

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I wanted to become more independent	0.797
I needed a change in my life	0.750
I wanted to broaden my horizons	0.493

**Factor 6: *Home system qualities***

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I thought that contact with teachers in my home country would be difficult	0.678
I thought that teaching methods would be boring in my home country	0.556
I thought that a higher level of English proficiency would improve my job prospects	0.460
I wanted to improve my foreign language competence	0.447

**Factor 7: *Status of institution***

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
34. I particularly wanted to study at the institution where I am now at	0.842
27. I particularly wanted to live in the city/town where my current institution is based	0.670
9. I particularly wanted to study at an institution with international reputation	0.465

## Reasons for selecting the UK

### Factor 1: *Accessibility of UK institutions*

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
The admission process was simple in the UK	0.879
The admission process was fast in the UK	0.869
I thought that it would be easy to get onto my preferred course in the UK	0.692
I found that it was easy to get information about courses in the UK	0.641
I thought that my course in the UK would be easy to complete	0.458

### Factor 2: *UK system qualities*

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I thought that the tutorial/seminar system would be good	0.706
I thought that contact with teachers in the UK would be good	0.657
I liked the empirical tradition in the UK	0.639
I thought that the quality of UK institutions would be very good	0.511
I was particularly interested in British culture	0.506
I thought that British people were friendly	0.421

### Factor 3: *Labour market status of UK system*

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I wanted to study at an institution with international reputation	0.791
I thought that courses in the UK would prepare me well for the labour market	0.720
I thought that a degree from the UK would improve my job prospects	0.641
I thought that the quality of UK institutions would be very good	0.579
I wanted particularly to study at the university where I am at	0.563

### Factor 4: *English language*

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I wanted to improve my English	0.890
I thought that a higher level of English proficiency would improve my job prospects	0.853

### Factor 5: *Course diversity*

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I found the combination of subjects that I wanted to study in the UK	0.799
I found exactly the course that I wanted to study in the UK	0.735
I wanted to do a course that was short	-0.364

### *Period of study abroad students*

#### Reasons for studying abroad

##### Factor 1: *Labour market value and skills*

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I thought that having international experience I would have better job prospects	0.901
I thought that for the career I wanted it would be better to study abroad for a period	0.816
I thought a higher English proficiency would improve my job prospects	0.806
I thought that studying abroad would improve my job prospects	0.792
I thought that many good students go to study abroad	0.400

##### Factor 2: *Academic experience*

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I wanted to get a different perspective on my subject	0.854
I wanted to experience different teaching and learning methods	0.789
I wanted to experience foreign academic communities	0.539
I wanted to broaden my horizons	0.453

##### Factor 3: *Delay study completion*

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I wanted to delay the completion of my studies	0.752
I wanted to delay getting a full-time job	0.736
I thought that many good students go to study abroad	0.553

##### Factor 4: *Quality and status of study*

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I particularly wanted to study at the institution where I am at	0.923
I particular wanted to study at an institution with international reputation	0.696

##### Factor 5: *Social experience*

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I particularly wanted to study in the UK	0.895
I wanted to improve my foreign language competence	0.487
I wanted to experience other cultures	0.410

**Factor 6: *Personal development***

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I wanted to become more independent	0.749
I wanted to live in the city/town	0.734

**Reasons for selecting the UK****Factor 1: *Quality and status of UK system***

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I particularly wanted to study at the university where I am at	0.780
I wanted to study at an institution with international reputation	0.711
I liked the empirical academic tradition in the UK	0.604
I wanted to experience the British academic tradition	0.553
I thought that the tutorial/seminar system would be good	0.495
I thought that the quality of UK institutions would be very good	0.471

**Factor 2: *Interest in further study***

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I wanted to explore the possibility for further study in the UK	0.870
I thought that a higher level of English proficiency would improve my job prospects	0.527
I thought that the tutorial/seminar system would be good	0.443

**Factor 3: *Social interest British culture***

<i>variable</i>	<i>loading</i>
I was particularly interested in British culture	0.912
I thought that British people would be friendly to foreign people	0.484

## APPENDIX 3

### Results of Analysis of Covariance: Mean estimates of factor scores

#### *Degree students*

#### Reasons for studying abroad

**Table A13 Mean estimates of factor scores, by student origin (grouped)**

Factor	Labour Market Skills	Quality of Study	Academic and Social Experience	Accessibility	Personal Development	Home system disadvantages	Status of institution abroad	N
PO-IT-SP	0.206	0.177	0.194	-0.124	-0.000	0.197	-0.100	55
BE-NE-LUX-AU	0.005	-0.260	0.000	-0.003	0.005	-0.008	-0.005	50
FR	0.335	-0.430	0.159	-0.002	-0.006	0.214	-0.411	51
GER	0.382	-0.393	0.276	-0.433	-0.006	0.250	-0.003	57
SWE-DE-FI	0.383	-0.513	0.139	0.264	-0.285	-0.447	-0.314	49
IR	-0.508	-0.200	-0.696	0.139	-0.006	-0.823	-0.005	47
GR	0.007	0.445	-0.157	0.478	0.007	-0.167	-0.136	78

**Table A14 Mean Estimates of factor scores, by parental education**

Factor	Labour Market Skills	Quality of Study	Academic and Social Experience	Accessibility	Personal Development	Home system disadvantages	Status of institution abroad	N
no parent with higher education	0.102	-0.152	-0.186	-0.004	0.006	0.143	-0.202	112
one parent with higher education	0.229	-0.223	0.001	0.003	0.008	-0.279	-0.249	75
both parents with higher education	0.006	-0.128	0.141	0.142	-0.268	-0.235	-0.002	117

**Table A15 Mean estimates of factor scores, by type of university**

Factor	Labour Market Value	Quality of Study	Academic and Social Experience	Accessibility	Personal Development	Home system disadvantages	Status of institution abroad	N
old	0.135	0.003	0.008	-0.007	-0.004	-0.151	0.008	222
new	0.130	-0.373	-0.002	0.166	-0.003	-0.009	-0.404	82

**Table A16 Mean estimates of factor scores, by sex**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Labour Market Value</b>	<b>Quality of study</b>	<b>Academic and Social Experience</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>	<b>Home system disadvantages</b>	<b>Personal Development</b>	<b>Status of institution abroad</b>	<b>N</b>
Male	0.277	-0.173	-0.008	0.005	-0.131	-0.175	-0.137	129
Female	-0.001	-0.163	0.005	0.003	-0.116	0.009	-0.179	175

**Table A17 Mean estimates of factor scores, by subject**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Labour Market Skills</b>	<b>Quality of Study</b>	<b>Academic and Social Experience</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>	<b>Personal Development</b>	<b>Home system disadvantages</b>	<b>Status of institution abroad</b>	<b>N</b>
Medicine/Allied Subjects	-0.138	-0.247	-0.009	0.175	-0.225	-0.194	-0.215	31
Physics/Maths/Computer Science	-0.007	-0.004	-0.430	-0.002	0.311	0.000	-0.228	27
Engineering/Technology/Architecture	-0.004	-0.321	0.128	0.004	0.001	0.003	-0.319	37
Social/Economic/Political Studies	0.173	-0.005	0.150	-0.008	0.177	-0.186	0.118	63
Business Administration and Combined	0.362	-0.118	0.188	0.126	0.009	-0.324	-0.164	40
Languages/Humanities/Arts	-0.332	-0.004	0.004	-0.009	-0.132	0.417	-0.003	48
Law	0.802	-0.469	-0.359	0.001	-0.404	-0.309	-0.193	14
Other	0.173	-0.137	0.283	-0.000	-0.166	-0.427	-0.192	34

**Table A18 Mean estimates of factor scores, by level of study**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Labour Market Skills</b>	<b>Quality of Study</b>	<b>Academic and Social Experience</b>	<b>Accessibility</b>	<b>Personal Development</b>	<b>Home system disadvantages</b>	<b>Status of institution abroad</b>	<b>N</b>
undergraduate	-0.007	-0.003	0.003	0.218	0.007	0.009	-0.007	166
postgraduate	0.121	-0.385	0.004	0.001	-0.164	-0.168	-0.193	83
research postgraduate	0.356	-0.007	-0.120	-0.102	-0.003	-0.299	-0.204	55



**Table A19 Mean estimates of factor scores, by perceived socio-economic status**

Factor	Labour Market Skills	Quality of Study	Academic and Social Experience	Accessibility	Personal Development	Home system disadvantages	Status of institution abroad	N
high	0.308	-0.001	-0.105	0.001	0.216	0.006	-0.005	43
above average	0.129	-0.269	-0.233	-0.008	-0.002	-0.007	-0.188	131
average	0.119	-0.268	-0.005	0.004	-0.235	-0.214	-0.236	118
below average-low	-0.002	-0.122	-0.245	0.205	0.126	-0.263	-0.157	12

**Table A20 Mean estimates of factor scores, by main source of finance**

Factor	Labour Market Value	Quality of study	Academic and Social Experience	Accessibility	Home system disadvantages	Personal Development	Status of institution abroad	N
self-financed	0.147	-0.006	-0.004	-0.005	-0.131	-0.003	-0.202	185
sponsored	0.119	-0.270	0.002	0.005	-0.116	-0.004	-0.114	119

## Reasons for selecting the UK

**Table A21 Mean estimates of factor scores, by student origin (grouped)**

Factor	UK system accessibility	UK system qualities	labour market status	English language	Course diversity	N
PO-IT-SP	0.136	-0.000	0.176	0.000	0.000	55
BE-NE-LUX-AU	0.005	0.159	-0.316	0.201	0.223	50
FR	-0.009	-0.004	-0.383	0.500	0.159	51
GER	-0.002	0.534	-0.159	0.329	-0.242	57
SWE-DE-FI	0.000	-0.750	-0.001	0.243	0.112	49
IR	0.009	-0.773	-0.236	-0.763	0.254	47
GR	0.386	0.007	0.268	-0.306	-0.168	78

**Table A22 Mean Estimates of factor scores, by parental education**

Factor	UK system accessibility	UK system qualities	labour market status	English language	course diversity	N
no parent with higher education	0.001	-0.114	0.000	-0.005	-0.136	112
one parent with higher education	0.137	-0.201	-0.144	0.122	0.009	75
both parents with higher education	0.008	-0.002	-0.148	0.002	0.184	117

**Table A23 Mean estimates of factor scores, by type of university**

Factor	UK System Accessibility	UK system qualities	Labour Market Status	English language	course diversity	N
old	-0.008	-0.005	0.107	-0.005	0.003	222
new	0.250	-0.173	-0.298	-0.114	0.006	82

**Table A24 Mean estimates of factor scores, by sex**

Factor	UK System Accessibility	UK system qualities	Labour Market Status	English language	course diversity	N
male	0.009	-0.006	0.004	0.008	-0.005	129
female	0.006	-0.162	-0.234	-0.002	0.155	175

**Table A25 Mean estimates of factor scores, by subject (grouped)**

Factor	UK system accessibility	UK system qualities	labour market status	English Language	Course Diversity	N
Medicine/Allied Subjects	0.574	-0.005	-0.370	-0.006	-0.285	36
Physics/Maths/Computer Science	0.197	-0.197	-0.187	-0.299	0.000	29
Engineering/Technology/Architecture	0.002	-0.432	-0.180	0.359	-0.008	35
Social/Economic/Political Studies	-0.105	0.007	0.112	-0.003	0.006	61
Business Administration and Combined	0.294	-0.000	-0.004	0.232	0.004	44
Languages/Humanities/Arts	-0.209	0.007	-0.392	-0.143	0.158	49
Law	-0.002	-0.241	0.465	0.140	0.132	16
Other	-0.111	-0.131	-0.162	0.005	0.360	34

**Table A26 Mean estimates of factor scores, by level of study**

Factor	UK System Accessibility	UK system qualities	Labour Market Status	English language	Course diversity	N
undergraduate	0.153	0.004	-0.196	0.152	-0.004	166
postgraduate (MA, MSc,...)	0.160	-0.162	-0.009	0.007	0.003	83
research postgraduate (MPhil., PhD)	-0.006	-0.227	0.009	-0.133	0.159	55

**Table A27 Mean estimates of factor scores, by perceived socio-economic status**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>UK System Accessibility</b>	<b>UK system qualities</b>	<b>Labour Market Status</b>	<b>English language</b>	<b>Course diversity</b>	<b>N</b>
high	-0.002	0.005	0.126	0.004	-0.001	43
above average	0.007	-0.173	-0.008	0.004	-0.004	131
average	0.003	-0.108	-0.171	0.003	0.177	118
below average-low	0.243	-0.227	0.255	-0.006	0.008	12

**Table A28 Mean estimates of factor scores, by main source of finance**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>UK System Accessibility</b>	<b>UK system qualities</b>	<b>Labour Market Status</b>	<b>English language</b>	<b>course diversity</b>	<b>N</b>
self-financed	0.005	-0.202	0.001	-0.008	0.001	185
sponsored	0.109	-0.002	-0.210	0.140	0.008	119

*Period of study abroad students*

Reasons for studying abroad

**Table A29 Mean estimates of factors, by student origin (grouped)**

Factor	Labour Market Value	Academic Experience	Delay Study Completion	Quality and status of study	Social experience	Personal development	N
PO-IT-SP-GR	-0.447	-0.255	-0.816	-0.009	-0.580	-0.495	23
BE-NE-AU	-0.678	-0.205	-0.530	-0.001	-0.491	-0.107	17
SWE-DE-FI	-0.169	-0.283	-0.561	-0.407	-0.120	-0.424	15
FR	-0.007	-0.387	-0.276	0.478	-0.314	-0.377	30
GER	-0.380	-0.118	0.328	0.389	-0.583	-0.474	20

**Table A30 Mean estimates of factors, by level of mother education**

Factor	Labour Market Value	Academic Experience	Delay Study Completion	Quality and status of study	Social experience	Personal development	N
without higher education	0.003	-0.007	-0.164	-0.004	-0.449	-0.342	60
with higher education	-0.731	-0.428	-0.578	0.183	-0.387	-0.409	45

**Table A31 Mean estimates of factors, by type of university**

Factor	Labour Market Value	Academic Experience	Delay Study Completion	Quality and status of study	Social Experience	Personal development	N
old	-0.166	-0.291	-0.463	0.163	-0.182	-0.431	73
new	-0.534	-0.209	-0.279	-0.002	-0.653	-0.320	32

**Table A32 Mean estimates of factors, by sex**

Factor	Labour Market Value	Academic Experience	Delay Study Completion	Quality and status of study	Social Experience	Personal development	N
male	-0.480	-0.668	-0.649	0.166	-0.702	-0.494	32
female	-0.219	-0.169	-0.009	-0.002	-0.134	-0.256	73

**Table A33 Mean estimates, by subject group studied at home**

Factor	Labour Market Value	Academic Experience	Delay Study Completion	Quality and status of study	Social Experience	Personal development	N
Sciences	-0.117	-0.109	0.003	-0.117	-0.589	-0.202	32
Social Sciences	-0.007	-0.446	-0.304	0.009	-0.229	-0.279	51
Languages-Humanities/Arts	-0.858	-0.194	-0.844	0.321	-0.435	-0.645	22

**Table A34 Mean estimates of factors, by socio-economic status**

Factor	Labour Market Value	Academic Experience	Delay Study Completion	Quality and status of study	Social Experience	Personal development	N
high	-0.177	0.126	-0.499	0.009	-0.414	-0.344	14
above average	-0.226	-0.002	0.003	-0.002	-0.679	-0.109	38
average	-0.442	-0.136	-0.359	-0.001	-0.578	-0.007	45
below average-low	-0.554	-0.966	-0.657	0.229	-0.000	-0.972	8

**Table A35 Mean estimates of factors, by mode of study abroad**

Factor	Labour Market Value	Academic Experience	Delay Study Completion	Quality and status of study	Social Experience	Personal development	N
compulsory	-0.402	-0.272	-0.489	-0.003	-0.732	-0.556	18
optional	-0.298	0.227	-0.253	0.179	-0.104	-0.195	87

**Table A36 Mean estimates of factors, by main source of finance**

Factor	Labour Market Value	Academic Experience	Delay Study Completion	Quality and status of study	Social Experience	Personal development	N
self-financed	-0.268	-0.321	-0.259	-0.005	-0.133	0.231	68
sponsored	-0.431	-0.179	-0.483	0.196	-0.702	0.269	37

## Reasons for selecting the UK

**Table A37 Mean estimates of factor scores, by student origin (grouped)**

Factor	Quality and status of UK system	Interest in further study	Social interest in British culture	N
PO-IT-SP-PO	-0.335	0.393	-1.011	23
BE-NE-AU	-0.181	-0.593	0.283	17
SWE-DE-FI	-0.362	-0.456	-0.312	15
FR	0.145	-0.565	-0.315	30
GER	-0.002	-0.400	-0.247	20

**Table A38 Mean estimates of factor scores, by type of university**

Factor	Quality and status of UK system	Interest in further study abroad	Social interest in British culture	N
old	0.003	-0.281	-0.444	73
new	-0.334	-0.368	-0.197	32

**Table A39 Mean estimates of factor scores, by level of mother education**

Factor	Quality and status of UK system	Interest in further study abroad	Social interest in British culture	N
without higher education	-0.258	-0.167	-0.203	60
with higher education	-0.004	-0.482	-0.438	45

**Table A40 Mean estimates of factor scores, by socio-economic status**

Factor	Quality and status of UK system	Interest in further study abroad	Social interest in British culture	N
high	-0.002	-0.158	-0.206	14
above average	-0.142	-0.323	-0.120	38
average	-0.003	-0.181	-0.111	45
below average-low	-0.407	-0.635	-0.844	8

**Table A41 Mean estimates of factor scores, by sex**

Factor	Quality and status of UK system	Interest in further study abroad	Social interest in British culture	N
Male	-0.225	-0.542	-0.600	32
Female	-0.007	-0.107	-0.004	73

**Table A42 Mean estimates of factor scores, by subject studied at home**

Factor	Quality and status of UK system	Interest in further study abroad	Social interest in British culture	N
Sciences	-0.150	-0.196	-0.328	32
Social Sciences	-0.253	-0.191	-0.408	51
Languages- Humanities/Arts	-0.005	-0.586	-0.225	22

**Table A43 Mean estimates of factor scores, by mode of study abroad**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Quality and status of UK system</b>	<b>Interest in further study abroad</b>	<b>Social interest in British culture</b>	<b>N</b>
compulsory	-0.166	-0.351	-0.377	18
optional	-0.137	-0.298	-0.263	87

**Table A44 Mean estimates of factor scores, by main source of finance**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Quality and status of UK system</b>	<b>Interest in further study abroad</b>	<b>Social interest in British culture</b>	<b>N</b>
self-financed	-0.182	-0.275	-0.007	68
sponsored	-0.121	-0.373	-0.564	37

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **The ADMIT Project**

**Project Title: Higher education admissions and student mobility within the EU – ‘ADMIT’**

#### **Research Partnership and Research Teams**

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## **The ADMIT Project research objectives**

The overarching objective of the project was to shed light on higher education admissions policies and practices at national and university levels and to relate these to student mobility. The specific objectives of the research were as follows:

- To compare policies and statistical data at a European and national level that relate to higher education admissions and the mobility of students across the EU; to review previous research and to provide a conceptual framework to aid our understanding of the differing systems in operation.
- To compare the development and recent changes to higher education admissions policies and practices at a national and university level. What are current policies and practices in relation to academic recognition? To what extent do philosophies of democratisation and marketisation prevail and what changes are taking place? What impact do different systems have on student mobility and on social cohesion?
- To explore the characteristics of students who choose to study outside their own country (e.g. in terms of their socio-economic and cultural/ethnic background) and to explore the reasons why they choose to undertake study abroad together with perceived costs and benefits.
- To examine whether there are specific needs for common curriculum elements in upper secondary general education and in first degree courses that would facilitate student mobility.
- What are the obstacles and barriers to transnational mobility? How can mobility of students be increased and facilitated across the countries of the EU? What examples of good practice exist? And what forms of organisational, institutional and governmental change are needed?

## **The ADMIT project research reports**

**ADMIT (1999a)** *Higher Education Admissions and Student Mobility within the EU: Work Package 1 Literature Review*, London: London School of Economics, Centre for Educational Research (and European Commission Research Directorate General).

**ADMIT (1999b)** *Higher Education Admissions and Student Mobility within the EU: Work Package 1 Legislation, Policy and Practice*, London: London School of Economics, Centre for Educational Research (and European Commission Research Directorate General).

**ADMIT (2000a)** *Higher Education Admissions and Student Mobility within the EU: Work Packages 2 & 4 Mobility, admissions and common curriculum elements* London: London School of Economics, Centre for Educational Research (and European Commission Research Directorate General).

**ADMIT (2000b)** *Higher Education Admissions and Student Mobility within the EU: Work Packages 3 Students who study abroad: Perspectives on mobility*, London: London School of Economics, Centre for Educational Research (and European Commission Research Directorate General).

**ADMIT (2000c)** *Higher Education Admissions and Student Mobility within the EU: Work Package 5 Obstacles and barriers to student mobility: What needs to be done?* London: London School of Economics, Centre for Educational Research (and European Commission Research Directorate General).

## **APPENDIX 5**

### **Instruments Used**

#### **Semi-Structured Interviews with European Mobile Students in the UK**

##### **Interview Schedule**

1. What is your home country/Where are you from?
2. What do you study?
3. Do you intend to get your degree in the UK institution/home institution/joint?
4. How long have you been in the UK for study purposes
5. How long do you intend to stay in the UK for study purposes?
6. Do you have any scholarship? Give details
7. Why do students from your country go abroad to study
8. Why did you decide to leave your country and study abroad?
9. What would have happened if you hadn't gone abroad to study?
10. How, do you think, your study abroad benefits you?
11. When did you decide to study abroad?
12. What exactly did you do (describe in details)?
13. With whom did you discuss your decision?
14. How did they respond?
15. Why do you think they responded like that?
16. In the process of preparing yourself to study abroad, was there anything that was putting you off?
17. What have been the disadvantages of studying abroad?
18. Some people decide to study abroad while some others do not. What do you think made *you* take such a decision?

19. How come and you decided to study in the UK?
20. Did you consider any other country?
21. (If *Yes*) Why did you consider that country?
22. What made you choose the UK?
23. What would have happened if you had not chosen the UK?
24. How did you choose the institution in the UK you are studying?
25. What are you going to do after you have your course completed?
26. Regarding the socio-economic status of your family in your country would you be able to tell whether that is?
27. What is the education of your father?
28. What is the education of your mother?
29. Do your parents speak foreign languages (specify for mother and father)
30. Had you spend time abroad before you come to the UK?
31. Have your parents studied/lived abroad?
32. Had any other members of your family study/lived abroad?
33. Have you got friends that have studied/study abroad?
34. What would you like to do after you complete your studies?
35. What did you wanted to do after the completion of your study at the time you decided to go abroad?
36. Did you know people in your country that they have benefited from studying abroad? How?
37. Do you think your study abroad will help you in your professional life? How?





# The London School of Economics and Political Science

15 March 2000

CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Director: Dr Anne West

Dear Colleague

**EU-funded research project: ADMIT – Higher Education Admissions and Student Mobility in the EU**

Further to my letter last month, I enclose the questionnaires for the above survey of EU students in UK higher education institutions. Each of the enclosed envelopes contains a questionnaire and covering letter together with a FREEPOST envelope for the students to return questionnaires to us.

As you will recall this survey is part of a major EU-funded research project, co-ordinated by the LSE, on higher education admissions and student mobility across the EU. An important part of the project involves examining students' reasons for studying in UK institutions. At present, there is little information that addresses this issue in relation to EU students.

We would like you to select **50 students** currently registered at your institution. Ideally, these should represent the composition of **EU undergraduate students** (studying for a full undergraduate degree, but not students on sub-degree or franchised courses), **EU postgraduate students** (studying for a Masters or Doctorate degree) and **EU Socrates-Erasmus/visiting students** (that is those who are studying at your institution for a period of time, not with a view to obtaining a full degree in the UK). In order to determine how many questionnaires to distribute to each category of students we have provided some notes on the attached sheet to assist you. If you need any more information please contact me ([a.west@lse.ac.uk](mailto:a.west@lse.ac.uk)) or my colleague Mr Apostolis Dimitropoulos ([a.dimitropoulos@lse.ac.uk](mailto:a.dimitropoulos@lse.ac.uk)).

I would like to thank you in advance for your co-operation with this study. As promised, I will be in touch with you later this year with specific analyses relating to the reasons given by EU students at your institution for studying abroad and more specifically choosing the UK.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

Dr Anne West

## Selecting 50 EU students – Steps to follow:

1. Calculate the number of EU undergraduate students<sup>1</sup> (not UK, but including Eire) currently registered at your institution (**category 1 students**)
2. Calculate the number of EU postgraduate (MSc, PhD etc.) students (not UK, but including Eire) currently registered at your institution (**category 2 students**)
3. Calculate the number of EU Socrates-Erasmus and/or visiting students (not UK, but including Eire) currently registered at your institution (**category 3 students**)
4. Add up the total number of students in all three categories and work out the percentage of students in each category
5. Select the 50 students in proportion to the percentages of students in categories 1, 2 and 3
6. In each of the categories of students please select students at random (so there are students from different countries, studying different subjects, part-time/full-time etc.)

Worked example 1	Worked example 2
<p>In your institution there are currently:</p> <p>Category 1: 300 EU undergraduate students  Category 2: 100 EU postgraduate students  Category 3: 100 Erasmus/visiting students  Total is: 500</p> <p>Proportion of category 1 students is 300/500 or 60%  Proportion of category 2 students is 100/500 or 20%  Proportion of category 3 students is 100/500 or 20%</p> <p>So select:</p> <p><i>30 students in category 1 (60% of 50)</i>  <i>10 students in category 2 (20% of 50)</i>  <i>10 students in category 3 (20% of 50)</i></p>	<p>In your institution there are currently:</p> <p>Category 1: 478 EU undergraduate students  Category 2: 267 EU postgraduate students  Category 3: 163 Erasmus/visiting students  Total is: 908</p> <p>Proportion of category 1 students is 478/908 or 53%  Proportion of category 2 students is 267/908 or 29%  Proportion of category 3 students is 163/908 or 18%</p> <p>So select:</p> <p><i>27 students in category 1 (53% of 50)</i>  <i>14 students in category 2 (29% of 50)</i>  <i>9 students in category 3 (18% of 50)</i></p>

<sup>1</sup> Please do not include students on sub-degree (e.g. Foundation, Access) courses or students on franchised courses.





# The London School of Economics and Political Science

CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Director: Dr Anne West

March 2000

Dear Student

## **EU-funded research: ADMIT - Higher Education Admissions and Student Mobility in the EU**

I am writing to ask for your help in an EU-funded research project being carried out at the Centre for Educational Research at the London School of Economics. The project is concerned with student mobility and higher education admissions in the EU.

As part of this project we are carrying out a major survey of EU students studying in UK universities (and other higher education institutions). We are looking in particular at students' reasons for choosing to study abroad and for studying in the UK. This is the first time that such a survey has been carried out.

A questionnaire is enclosed which I should be grateful if you would complete and return it to the LSE in the FREEPOST envelope provided (no stamp is needed). Please send the questionnaire as soon as possible – and in any case by **12 May 2000**.

As you will see your responses will remain **confidential**, as we have not asked for your name. The results of the survey will be made available on the CER web page on the LSE's web-site later this year (<http://www.lse.ac.uk/>). If you have any queries please feel free to contact me ([a.west@lse.ac.uk](mailto:a.west@lse.ac.uk)) or my colleague Mr Apostolis Dimitropoulos ([a.dimitropoulos@lse.ac.uk](mailto:a.dimitropoulos@lse.ac.uk)).

Thank you in advance for your help with this important survey.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

Dr Anne West



# Centre for Educational Research London School of Economics and Political Science

## Studying abroad: A survey of EU students in UK universities

The Centre for Educational Research (CER) at the LSE is carrying out a major survey of EU students studying in UK higher education institutions (universities, colleges etc.). We are looking in particular at students' reasons for studying abroad. This is the first time that such a survey has been carried out. The research is part of an EU-funded research project that is examining student mobility and higher education admissions across a sample of EU countries. As you will see your responses will remain **confidential**, as we have not asked for your name. The results of the survey will be made available on the CER web page on the LSE's web-site in December 2000. When you have completed the form, please return it in the FREEPOST envelope provided (no stamp is needed) to Centre for Educational Research, London School of Economics and Political Science, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE.

**PLEASE LEAVE  
BOXES BLANK**

*Please answer all relevant questions*

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 4

### Background information

- 1 Name of higher education institution in the UK \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 Your age \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 Your sex (male or female) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 Country of birth \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 Nationality (if dual, give both) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 Country you identify as your 'home' country \_\_\_\_\_


 7  
9  
10  
12  
16  
18

### Type of study in the UK

- 7 I am studying in the UK..... (Circle one number)

- |   |   |                   |    |
|---|---|-------------------|----|
| For a degree to be awarded in the UK.....                                   | 1 | Go to question 8  |    |
| For a joint degree to be awarded by institution in UK and home country..... | 2 | Go to question 19 |    |
| As part of SOCRATES-ERASMUS .....   | 3 | Go to question 19 |    |
| For a period of time under another arrangement (please give details) _____  | 4 | Go to question 19 | 19 |

### Studying for a degree to be awarded in the UK

- 8 Level of *current* course (e.g. HND, BSc, MA, PhD) \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 Title of *current* course (e.g. BSc in Computer Science) \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 When did you begin your *current* course of study in the UK?  
(Give month and year e.g. 10/98) \_\_\_\_\_
- 11 What is the duration of your *current* course in the UK? (Give number of months e.g. 12) \_\_\_\_\_
- 12 Did you consider studying in your home country instead of coming to the UK  
for your *current* degree? (Please circle 1 for 'yes' or 2 for 'no')

- |     |   |                   |    |
|-----|---|-------------------|----|
| Yes | 1 | Go to question 13 |    |
| No  | 2 | Go to question 14 | 31 |

- 13 Which of the following apply? (Circle one response)

- |   |   |  |    |
|---|---|--|----|
| I considered applying for a place (or sitting the exams) but decided not to.... | 1 |  |    |
| I applied for a place (or sat the exams) but was not offered a place.....       | 2 |  |    |
| I applied for a place (or sat the exams) and was offered a place.....           | 3 |  | 32 |

## Why study abroad?

- 14 Here is a list of some reasons students may have for studying abroad and not in their home country.  
For each item circle the appropriate number.

Not at all important	Of some importance	Important	Very important	Not relevant
1	2	3	4	0

*I chose to study my current course abroad, and not in my home country, because at that time ...*

1	I wanted to get a different perspective on my subject .....	1	2	3	4		33
2	I wanted to improve my chances of getting a good job.....	1	2	3	4		
3	I wanted to experience other cultures.....	1	2	3	4		
4	I wanted to get better research experience than I could get in my home country.....	1	2	3	4	0	
5	My preferred course was not available in my home country.....	1	2	3	4	0	
6	I wanted to become more independent .....	1	2	3	4		
7	My preferred course would take longer to complete in my home country .....	1	2	3	4		
8	My friends had gone abroad to study.....	1	2	3	4		
9	I particularly wanted to study at an institution with an international reputation.....	1	2	3	4		
10	Many good students go to study abroad .....	1	2	3	4		
11	I thought that studying abroad would improve my job prospects.....	1	2	3	4		
12	I thought that facilities (e.g. libraries, laboratories) in my home country were not very good ..	1	2	3	4		
13	I needed a change in my life.....	1	2	3	4		45
14	I wanted a better quality education than the one offered in my home country.....	1	2	3	4		
15	I wanted my previous qualification to be recognised in my home country.....	1	2	3	4	0	
16	I wanted to broaden my horizons.....	1	2	3	4		
17	I particularly wanted to study in the UK.....	1	2	3	4		
18	I thought that it would be less expensive to study abroad.....	1	2	3	4		
19	I wanted to improve my foreign language competence.....	1	2	3	4		
20	I was not sure that I would get through the end of year exams in my home country.....	1	2	3	4	0	
21	The conditions offered by the sponsor/funding body were attractive .....	1	2	3	4	0	
22	It was difficult to get into any higher education institution in my home country.....	1	2	3	4		
23	It was difficult to get into my preferred institution in my home country.....	1	2	3	4		55
24	It was difficult to get into my preferred subject in my home country.....	1	2	3	4		
25	I wanted to experience different teaching and learning methods.....	1	2	3	4		
26	My preferred course would be of a better quality abroad.....	1	2	3	4		
27	I particularly wanted to live in the city/town where my current institution is based .....	1	2	3	4		
28	I wanted to delay getting a full-time job.....	1	2	3	4		
29	I thought that for the career I wanted it would be better to study abroad .....	1	2	3	4		
30	I wanted to experience foreign academic communities.....	1	2	3	4		
31	I wanted to postpone marriage .....	1	2	3	4	0	
32	It was difficult to get information about courses in my home country.....	1	2	3	4	0	
33	I thought that a higher level of English proficiency would improve my job prospects.....	1	2	3	4		65
34	I particularly wanted to study at the institution that I am now at.....	1	2	3	4		
35	I thought that contact with teachers in my home country would be difficult.....	1	2	3	4		
36	I thought that teaching methods would be boring in my home country.....	1	2	3	4		
37	I thought that having international experience I would have better job prospects .....	1	2	3	4		
38	My family wanted me to study abroad.....	1	2	3	4		
39	It seemed less sure that I would complete my studies in my home country .....	1	2	3	4		
40	I thought that courses in my home country would be too general.....	1	2	3	4		
41	Former teachers recommended that I study abroad.....	1	2	3	4	0	
42	I thought that the weather would be better abroad.....	1	2	3	4	0	
43	I wanted to postpone military service.....	1	2	3	4	0	75
44	OTHER REASON (please give details) .....						

		77
--	--	----

- 15 Which of the reasons you have given above were the **three most important**?  
Please give the number alongside the statement (e.g. 23)

1 <sup>st</sup>	_____
2 <sup>nd</sup>	_____
3 <sup>rd</sup>	_____

		79
		81
		83

16 Was the UK your first choice of country for your *current* course of study?  
(Please circle 1 or 2)

Yes 1  
No 2

84

If No: Which was your first choice of country for your current course of study?  86

Why did you not go there? (Please explain)  90

Why study in the UK?

17 Here is a list of some reasons students may have for choosing to study in the UK.  
For each item circle the appropriate number.

	Not at all important 1	Of some importance 2	Important 3	Very important 4	Not relevant 0	
<i>I chose to study my current course in the UK because at that time ...</i>						
1	I was living (or studying ) in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	0 91
2	I wanted particularly to study at the university where I am at.....	1	2	3	4	
3	I wanted to meet students from many different countries.....	1	2	3	4	
4	English was my only foreign language.....	1	2	3	4	0
5	I was particularly interested in British culture.....	1	2	3	4	95
6	I thought that the quality of UK institutions would be very good.....	1	2	3	4	
7	I thought that with a degree from the UK I would have better job prospects.....	1	2	3	4	
8	My English was better than the other foreign languages I know.....	1	2	3	4	
9	It seemed less expensive to study in the UK than elsewhere.....	1	2	3	4	
10	I wanted to do a course that was short.....	1	2	3	4	10
11	Members of my family were living (or had previously lived) in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	0
12	I thought that my course in the UK would be easy to complete.....	1	2	3	4	
13	I had friends in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	0
14	I liked the empirical academic tradition in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	
15	The UK is not far from my home country.....	1	2	3	4	10
16	I wanted to improve my English.....	1	2	3	4	
17	I thought that it would be easy to get onto my preferred course in the UK .....	1	2	3	4	
18	I wanted to study at an institution with an international reputation.....	1	2	3	4	
19	I thought that courses in the UK would prepare me well for the labour market.....	1	2	3	4	
20	The admission process was simple in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	11
21	The admission process was fast in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	
22	British people were friendly to foreign people.....	1	2	3	4	
23	I found that it was easy to get information about courses in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	
24	I found exactly the course I wanted to study in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	
25	I thought that contact with teachers in the UK would be good.....	1	2	3	4	11
26	My boyfriend or girlfriend was (or would also be) in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	0
27	I thought that a higher level of English proficiency would improve my job prospects.....	1	2	3	4	
28	I had previously lived (or studied) in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	0
29	I found the combination of subjects that I wanted to study in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	
30	I wanted my research to be supervised by a particular academic in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	0 12
31	I thought that the weather would be good in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	0
32	Former teachers recommended that I study in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	0
33	My family wanted me to study in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	0
34	I thought that the tutorial/seminar system would be good.....	1	2	3	4	12
35	OTHER REASON (please give details).....					
	.....					
	.....					




18 Which of the reasons you have given above were the **three most important**?  
Please give the number along side statement (e.g. 23)

1<sup>st</sup> \_\_\_\_\_  
2<sup>nd</sup> \_\_\_\_\_  
3<sup>rd</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

12  
13  
13

Go to Question 29a

**Students studying in the UK for a period of study (e.g. Erasmus)**

- 
 13  
 13  

 13  
 14  
 14  

 14  
 14

Not at all important	Of some importance	Important	Very important	Not relevant
1	2	3	4	0

*I chose to study abroad as part of my current degree because at that time ...*

- 17

- 1<sup>st</sup> \_\_\_\_\_  
2<sup>nd</sup> \_\_\_\_\_  
3<sup>rd</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

		17
		18
		18

27 Here is a list of some reasons students may have for choosing to study in the UK.  
For each item circle the appropriate number

Not at all important 1	Of some importance 2	Important 3	Very important 4	Not relevant 0			
<i>I chose to study in the UK as part of my current degree because at that time ...</i>							
1	Members of my family were living (or had previously lived) in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	0	18
2	I wanted to meet students from many different countries.....	1	2	3	4		
3	I wanted to improve my English.....	1	2	3	4		
4	I had friends in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	0	
5	I thought that the quality of UK institutions would be very good.....	1	2	3	4		
6	I was particularly interested in British culture.....	1	2	3	4		
7	I thought that the weather would be good in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	0	19
8	I had previously lived (or studied) in the UK .....	1	2	3	4	0	
9	English was my only foreign language .....	1	2	3	4	0	
10	I particularly wanted to study at the university where I am at.....	1	2	3	4		
11	I thought that with a degree from the UK I would have better job prospects .....	1	2	3	4		
12	I liked the empirical academic tradition in the UK.....	1	2	3	4		19
13	My boyfriend or girlfriend was (or would also be) in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	0	
14	My English was better than the other foreign languages I know.....	1	2	3	4		
15	It seemed less expensive to study in the UK .....	1	2	3	4		
16	Members of my family were living (or had previously lived) in the UK.....	1	2	3	4	0	
17	The UK was close to my home country .....	1	2	3	4	0	20
18	I thought that British people were friendly to foreign people.....	1	2	3	4		
19	I wanted to explore the possibility for further study in the UK.....	1	2	3	4		
20	I wanted to study at an institution with an international reputation.....	1	2	3	4		
21	I wanted to experience the British academic tradition.....	1	2	3	4		
22	I thought that a higher level of English proficiency would improve my job prospects.....	1	2	3	4		20
23	It was simple to get into the UK institution.....	1	2	3	4	0	
24	I thought that the tutorial system/seminar would be good.....	1	2	3	4		20
25	OTHER REASON (please give details)_____						<div><div></div><div></div></div> 20

28 Which of the reasons you have given above were the **three most important**?  
Please give the number along side statement (e.g. 23)

1 <sup>st</sup>	_____	<div><div></div><div></div></div>	21
2 <sup>nd</sup>	_____	<div><div></div><div></div></div>	21
3 <sup>rd</sup>	_____	<div><div></div><div></div></div>	21

### Financing your studies

29a How is your current course in the UK financed? (Please circle 1 for 'yes' or 2 for 'no' on each line)

	Yes	No	
Family.....	1	2	21
Loan from the government in your home country.....	1	2	
Grant from the government in your home country.....	1	2	
European Union grant.....	1	2	
UK grant (e.g. ESRC).....	1	2	22
Home institution .....	1	2	
UK institution.....	1	2	
Foundation in home country.....	1	2	
Employer.....	1	2	
Personal savings.....	1	2	22
Work in the UK.....	1	2	

29b What is the **main** source of funds for your current course/period of study in the UK? \_\_\_\_\_

22

29c If relevant: Who pays the tuition fees charged by your institution? \_\_\_\_\_

23

## Experience of other countries

**30a** Had you spent time abroad before you started your current course? (Please circle one number on each line. If 'yes' to any, insert number of countries)

Yes No If yes: Give number of countries

Holidays abroad.....	1	2	_____
Primary education.....	1	2	_____
Secondary education/training.....	1	2	_____
Higher education.....	1	2	<b>If Yes: Go to Q 30b</b>
School exchange/stayed with family abroad..	1	2	_____
Summer school abroad.....	1	2	_____
Training/internship abroad.....	1	2	_____
Work abroad .....	1	2	_____

				23
				23
				23
				24
				24
				24
				24
				25

**30b** If Yes to Higher education: Course(s) studied \_\_\_\_\_

		25
--	--	----

Country/countries \_\_\_\_\_

		25
--	--	----

**31** Which languages do you speak? For each language please circle level of proficiency:

Name of language	Able to cope with limited routine situations	Able to use the language effectively & accurately in most contexts	Fluent
1: _____	1	2	3
2: _____	1	2	3
3: _____	1	2	3
4: _____	1	2	3

				25
				26
				26
				26

## Your family

**32** Please complete the following for your mother and your father

Mother

Father

Country of residence.....

Country of birth .....

Nationality.....

No. of languages spoken including mother tongue (all levels of proficiency).....

Years of formal education and/or training \* (e.g. ages 6 to 23 is 17 years).....

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

				27
				27
				28
				28
				28

\* Exclude pre-compulsory education (e.g. kindergarten)

**33** For each of the following please circle if family or friends have studied, worked or lived abroad (Please circle as many as necessary):

Studied abroad

Worked/lived abroad

Mother.....	1	1
Father.....	1	1
Brother/sister.....	1	1
Other family members.....	1	1
Close friend.....	1	1

				28
				29
				29
				29
				29

34 What are the **highest** levels of education or training of your mother and father?  
(Please circle one response for your mother and one for your father)

	Mother	Father
1. Primary education.....	1	1
2. Lower/compulsory secondary education.....	1	1
3. Upper/post-compulsory secondary education.....	1	1
4. Vocational education/training.....	1	1
5. Higher education (not postgraduate degree).....	1	1
6. Higher education (postgraduate degree).....	1	1

☐ ☐ 29

35 Do you consider that the socio-economic status of your family in your home country is:  
(please circle one):

High.....	1
Above average .....	2
Average.....	3
Below average.....	4
Low.....	5

29

36a Did any of the following have a **positive influence** on your decision to study abroad?  
(Please circle 1 for 'yes' or 2 for 'no' on each line)

	Yes	No
Mother .....	1	2
Father .....	1	2
Brother/sister.....	1	2
Friend .....	1	2
Former teacher.....	1	2
University teacher.....	1	2
Other (please specify).....		

30

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☐ 30

36b Which of the above were the two most influential? (Please give 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> most influential people)

1<sup>st</sup> \_\_\_\_\_  
2<sup>nd</sup> \_\_\_\_\_

☐ 30

☐ 30

36c The most influential person in my family was (Please circle one):

Mother      Father      Brother      Sister

Other (please Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

☐ 30

36d He or she believed that ... (Circle 1 for 'yes' or 2 for 'no' or 3 for 'don't know' on each line):

	Yes	No	Don't know
Having studied abroad I would have better job prospects....	1	2	3
The quality of education abroad would be better.....	1	2	3
Studying abroad would broaden my horizons.....	1	2	3

31

31

31

36e The most influential person outside my family was (*Please circle one*):

Friend                      Former teacher                      University teacher

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

☐ 31

36f He or she believed that ... (*Circle 1 for 'yes', 2 for 'no' or 3 for 'don't know' on each line*):

Yes                      No                      Don't know

Having studied abroad I would have better job prospects....	1	2	3	31
The quality of education abroad would be better.....	1	2	3	31
Studying abroad would broaden my horizons.....	1	2	3	31

## Future plans

37 **BEFORE** you started your *current* course (or period of study) in the UK, what did you hope to do after you had completed your degree? (*Please insert your 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> choices below in the column headed BEFORE*)

**BEFORE                      NOW**

- 1 Seek a job in your home country.....
- 2 Seek a job in the UK.....
- 3 Seek a job in another country (not your home country or the UK)
- 4 Study a further course in your home country.....
- 5 Study a further course in the UK.....
- 6 Study a further course in another country (not your home country or the UK).....

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

☐ 31  
☐ 32

38 **NOW**, what do you hope to do after you have obtained your degree? (*Please insert your 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> choices above in the column headed NOW*)

39 (*If you are studying for a degree to be awarded in the UK*) Is there anything else that you would like to add about your reasons for not studying in your home country?

_____
_____
_____

40 Is there anything else that you would like to add about your reasons for choosing to study abroad?

_____
_____
_____

41 Is there anything else that you would like to add about your reasons for choosing to study in the UK?

_____
_____
_____

☐ 32  
☐ 32

*Please check that you have completed all relevant questions. Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire.*  
Please return your completed questionnaire by 5 May 2000 to: Centre for Educational Research, London School of Economics and Political Science, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE in the FREEPOST envelope provided.